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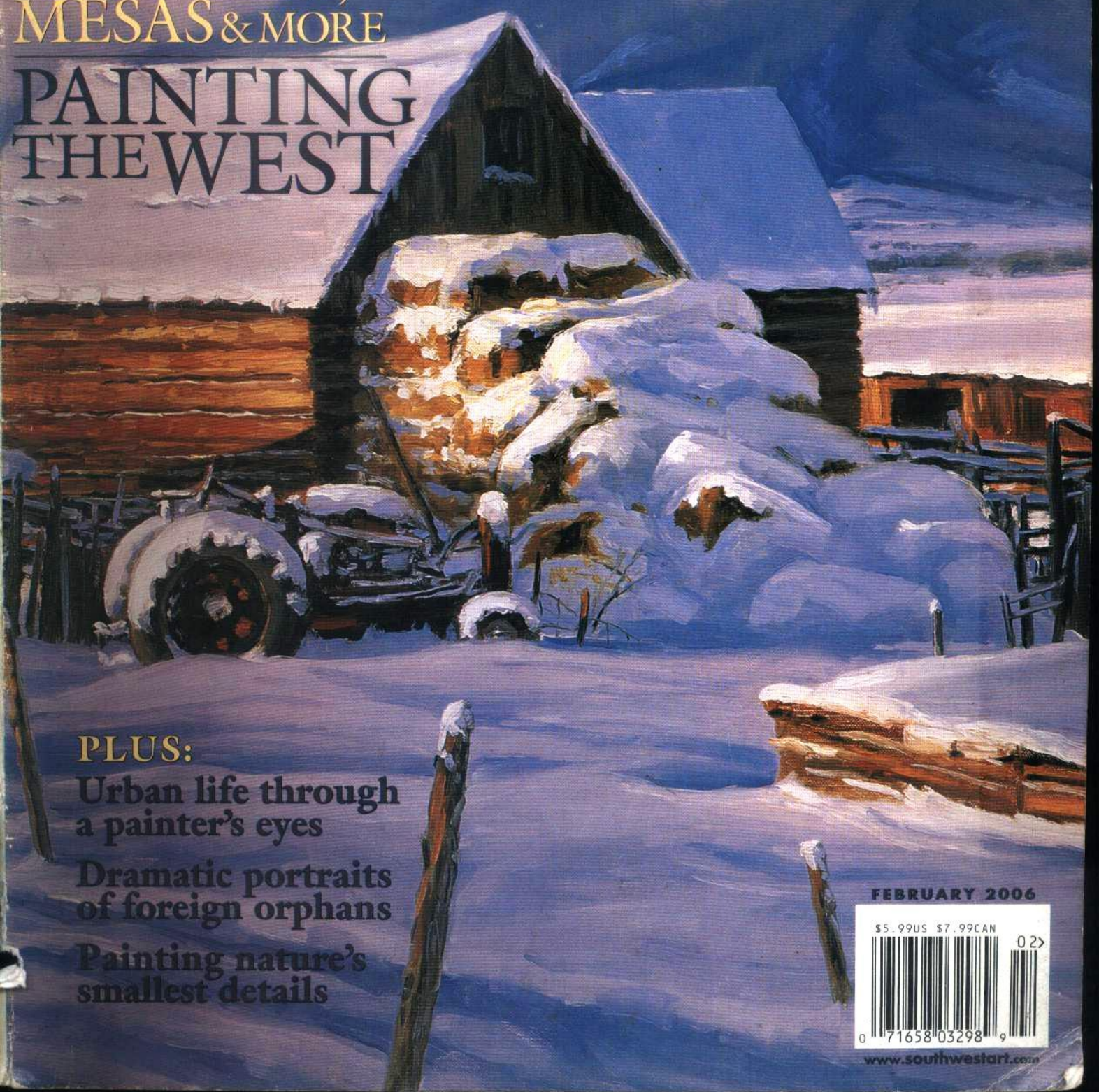

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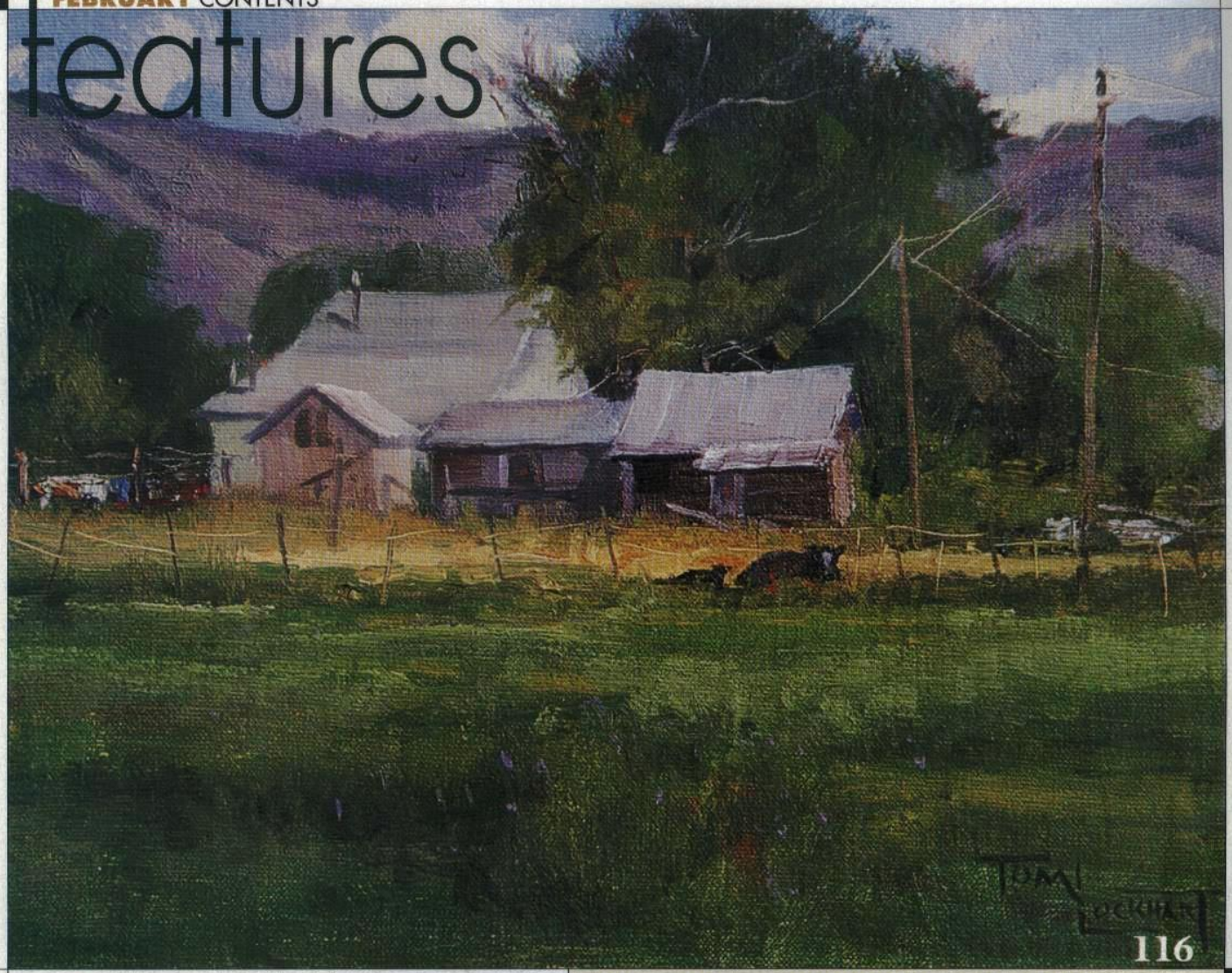

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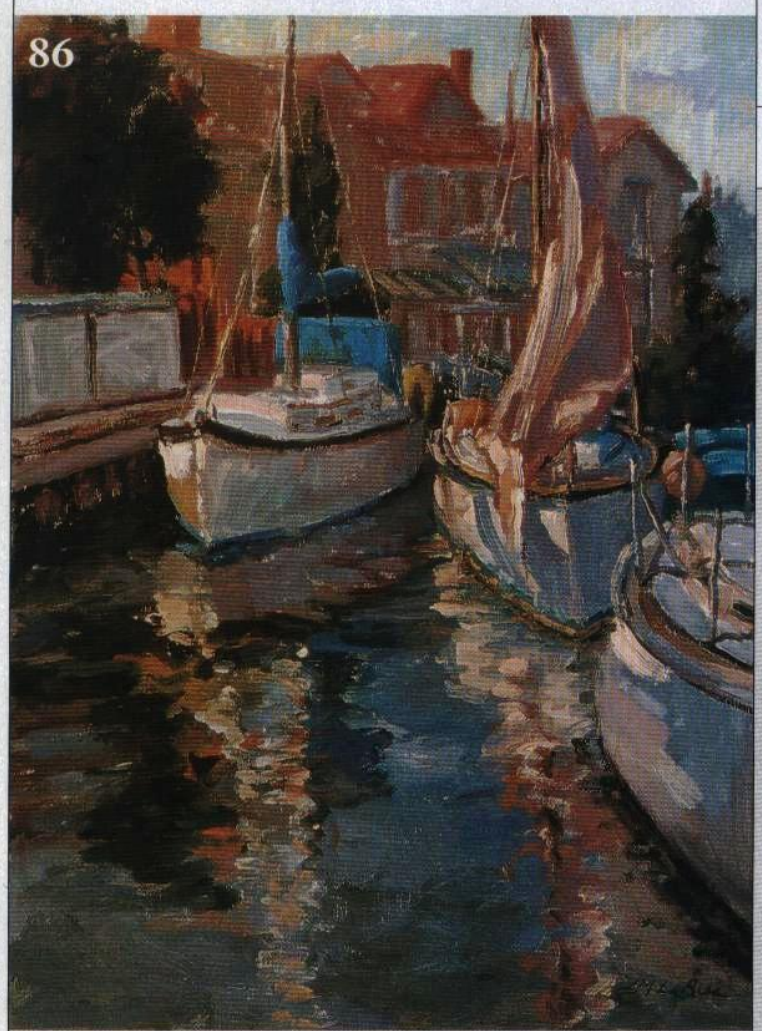

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Nicolai Fechin
Dan Gerhartz
Walter Gonske
Bruce Greene
Martin Grelle
Robert Griffing
David Halbach
Doug Hall
G. Harvey
Bill Hughes
Wilson Hurley
Harry Jackson
Oreland C. Joe

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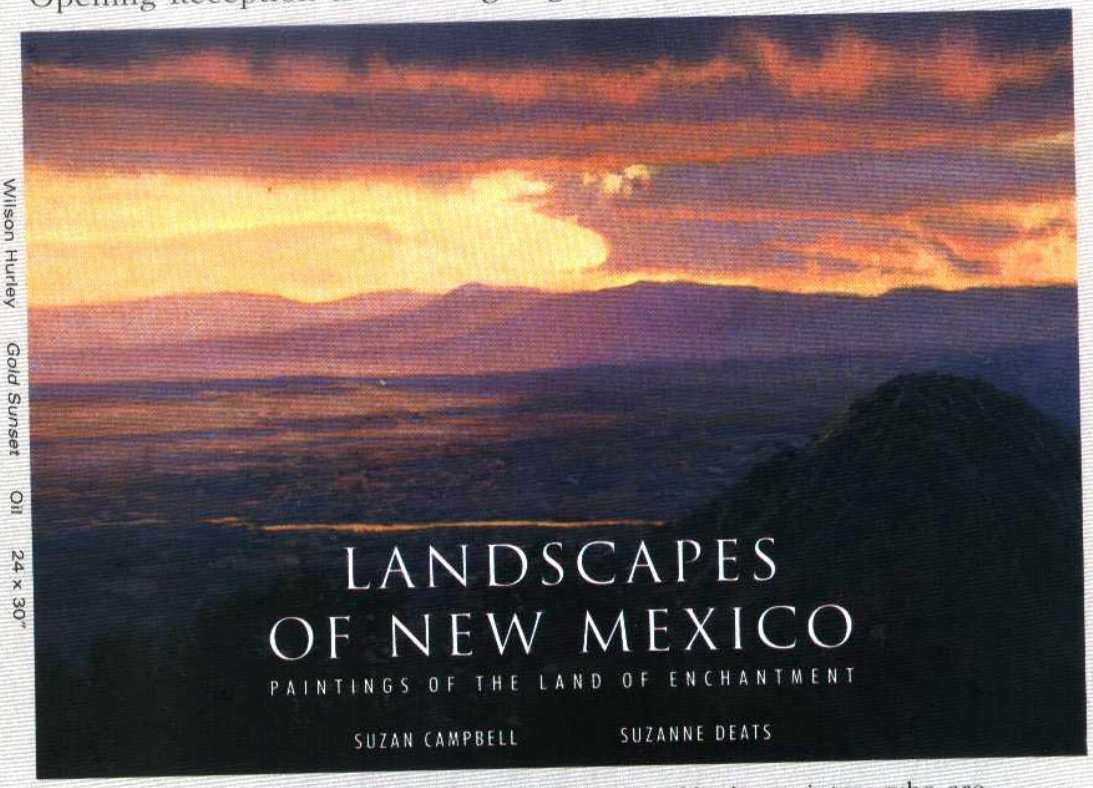

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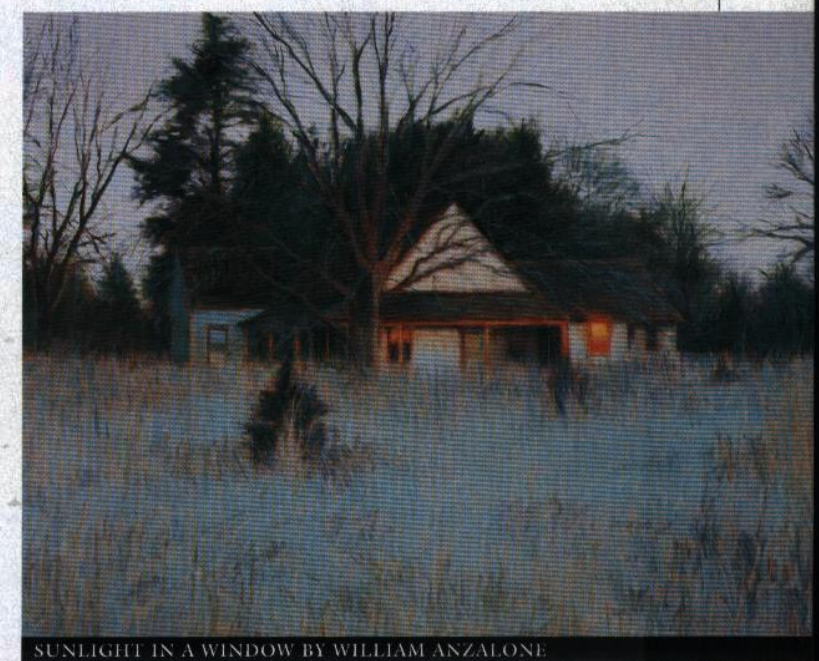
SUBTLE BEAUTY

APPRECIATING A QUIET TEXAS LANDSCAPE

I'VE HAD THE GOOD FORTUNE, OVER THE YEARS, to visit some of the most beautiful and iconic scenery in the West. I've seen the craggy peaks of Grand Teton National Park and the sprawling canyons of Yellowstone. I've traveled throughout the Rocky Mountains, from Colorado's "Fourteeners" to Utah's snow-covered Wasatch. I've marveled at the red rocks of Sedona, experienced the vast Arizona desert, stood in jaw-dropping awe at the edge of the Grand Canyon.

In many of these places, the natural beauty is dramatic. And often, after I've visited, I'll see a painting of that same vista and compare it to my own experience. Did the painter experience it in the same light, at the same time of day, feel the same mood, as I did? Was he or she struck by the shadows as much as I was?



SUNLIGHT IN A WINDOW BY WILLIAM ANZALONE

But let me tell you about an experience of the landscape I had recently that was different on both counts: The beauty was subtle, not stunning; and instead of experiencing it for the first time, I realized that I'd seen it before … in paintings by one of this month's featured artists.

It was late on a Saturday afternoon, and I was driving from Houston to Austin, a three-hour trip. I was taking a new route for the first time, and once I got off of Interstate 10, it turned out to be a long stretch of back roads along wide, grassy fields, interrupted only occasionally by a farmhouse. I was struck by the emptiness (maybe I'd been spending too much time in the big city, where it's hard to go a mile without seeing a strip mall). The further I went, the more rolling the landscape became, and as the sun dropped lower in the mostly overcast sky, the light grew softer and more gray. It was a quiet, contemplative landscape, perfect for a peaceful drive.

And I realized why these vistas resonated so deeply: I'd been looking at them for the past several weeks in the paintings of William Anzalone, who is profiled beginning on page 110. The artist lives in a small town in the very same area I was driving through, and as I rounded the curves in the road I found myself thinking, again and again, "There's an Anzalone painting." I believe I would have found the landscape lovely that day anyway, but Anzalone's work deepened my appreciation for a subtly beautiful slice of the West—one that otherwise might not have made my list of scenic places. I hope you, too, will be able to visit some of the western scenes that you'll see in this issue, and appreciate them all the more.

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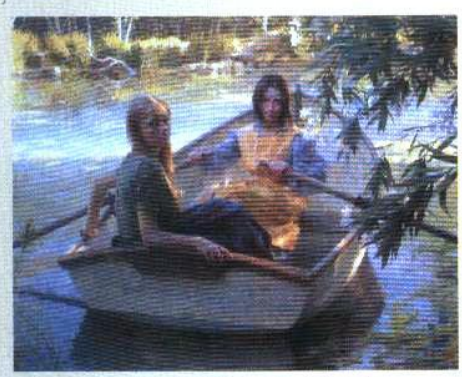
Meet these Artists

Cassandra Christensen-Barney, Bob Coronato, William S. Phillips, Don Crowley, Ken Auster, Morgan Weistling, James C. Christensen, and Mian Situ

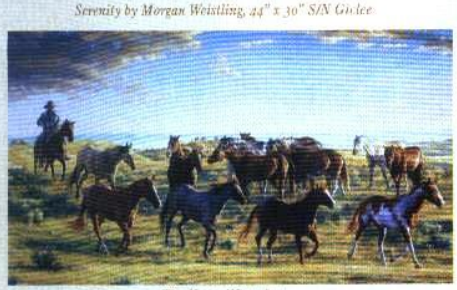


Serenity by Morgan Weistling, 44" x 30" S/N Giclee

Forest from the Trees by Ken Auster, 48" x 40" S/N Giclee

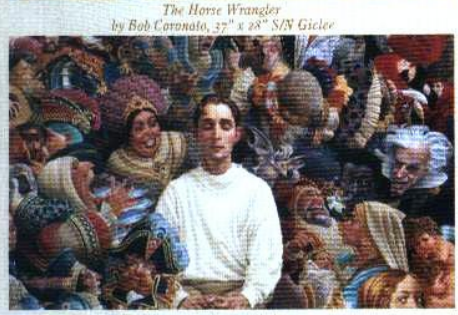
Revelation by William Phillips, 54"x 43" S/N Giclee

The Golden Mountain by Mian Situ, 50" x 69" S/N Giclee



The Horse Wrangler by Bob Coronato, 37" x 28" S/N Giclee

Fleur by Cassandra Christensen-Barney, 12" x 18" S/N Giclee



The Listener by James Christensen, 30"x 30" S/N Giclee

Ripples by Don Crowley, 20" x 16" S/N Giclee

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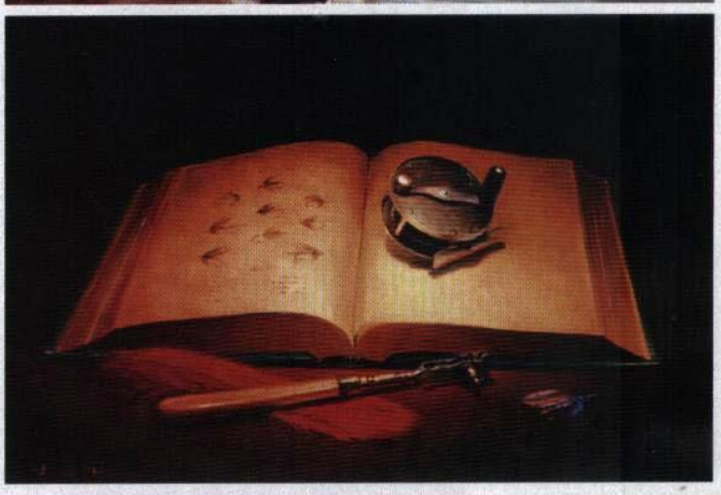
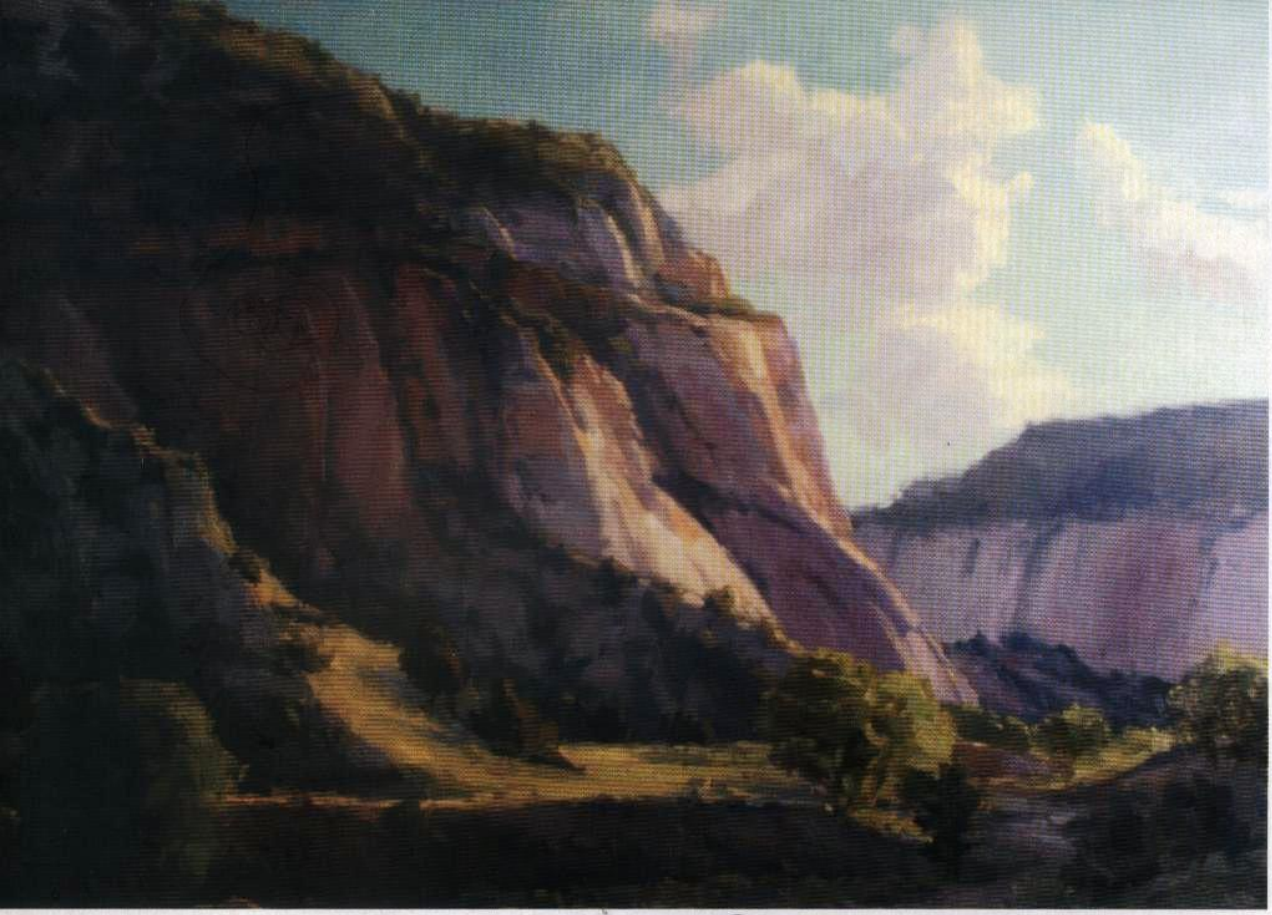


Chiu Tak Hak *Un Fin Apres Midi* acrylic 9.5 x 13 $3,250.
Scott Christensen *Pacific Waters* oil 10 x 12 $2,500.
Adriano Manocchia *Those Days at the Lake* oil 6 x 9 $1,100.

Howard Terpning *Sign Along the Trail* oil 11 x 11.5 min bid $28,000.



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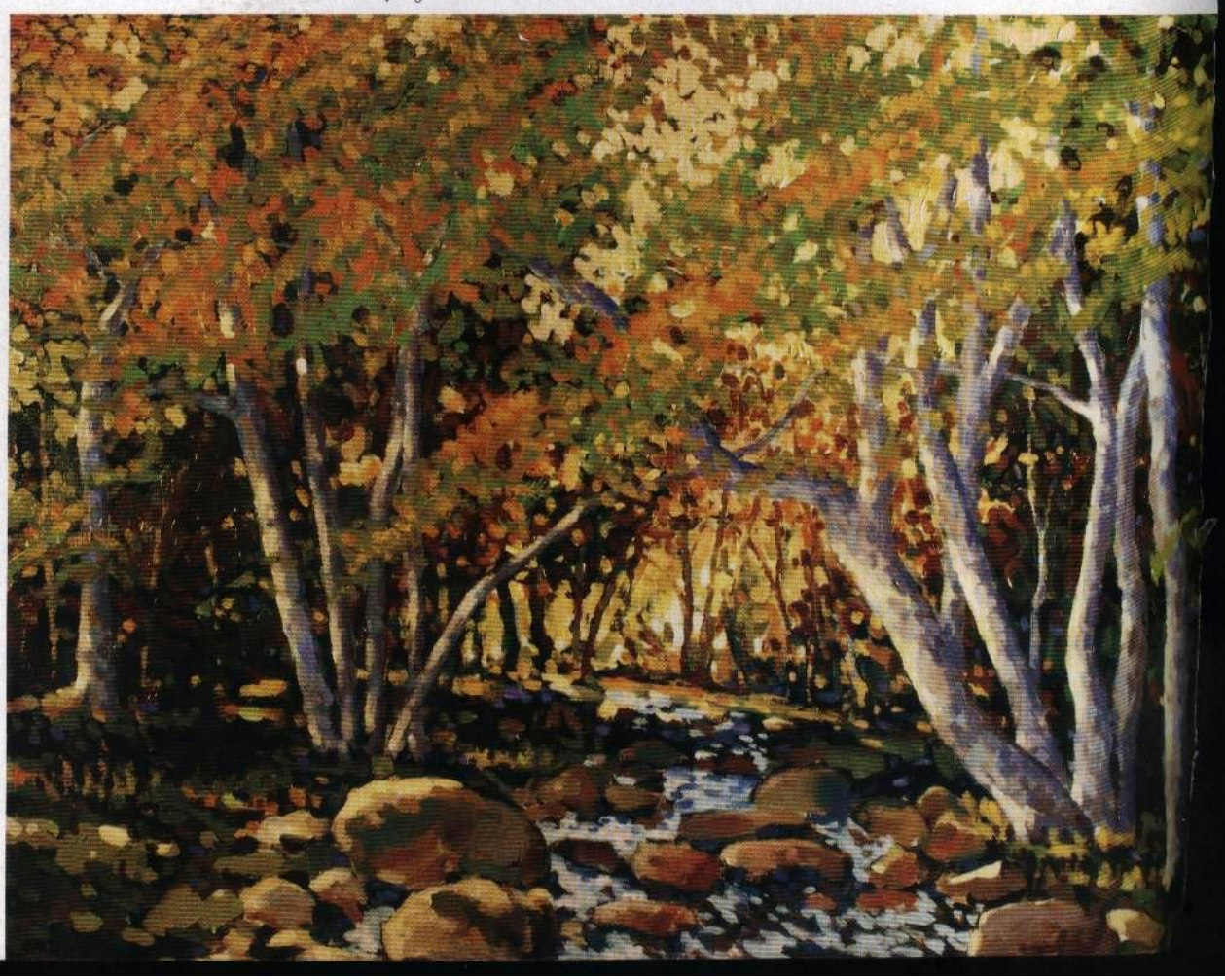

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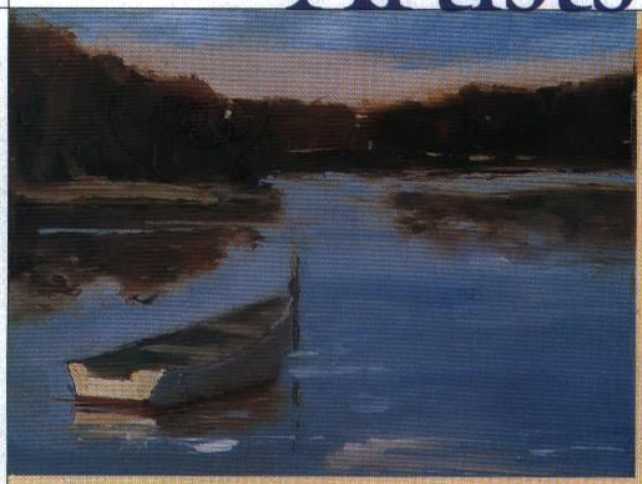
Artists to Watch



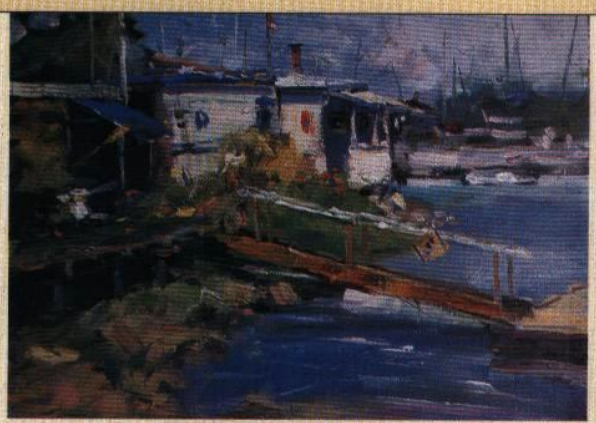
WYE RIVER BOAT BY BETHANNE KINSELLA COPLE

Bethanne Kinsella Cople

Atmospheric skies and seas are among the favored subject matter of Virginia-based painter Bethanne Kinsella Cople. On most days, she can be found heading for the Potomac River near her home in Alexandria with her easel in tow. But she also is a regular traveler to scenic western locales, including Carmel, CA; Park City, UT; and Fredericksburg, TX. "I love being outside painting in the elements and being surrounded by beauty," she says. "When I discovered plein-air painting, I found my true calling."

Cople admits that her passion for landscape painting sometimes runs to the point of obsession. She has painted in blizzards in Utah's Wasatch Mountains, on steep cliffs in Monhegan Island, ME, and in strong gale winds along the rugged Northern California coast. Working in extreme weather conditions appeals to the artist because it tests the ➤

Pang-Yen Chou



SAUSALITO HARBOR BY PANG-YEN CHOU

California painter Pang-Yen Chou arrived in the United States in 1999 with one goal in mind—to broaden his art education. Chou settled in San Francisco, which he still calls home today, and earned a master's degree in fine art from the Academy of Art University. He cites his teachers, Huihan Liu and Po Pin Lin, as major influences. They helped him make the tricky transformation from "Chinese painting to a western style of oil painting," Chou says.

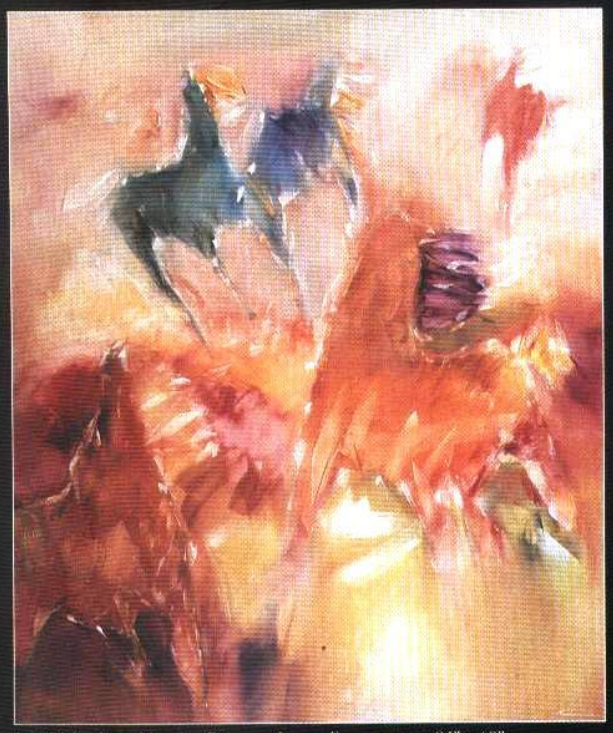
A hard worker, the 34-year-old artist has quickly found his niche in the painting world. Landscapes are his subject of choice, and he prefers painting on location in scenic nearby towns such as Sausalito, Mill Valley, and Kensington. "I don't like to stay at home," says Chou, noting that he prefers getting in his car and driving until he finds the perfect vista to render for his next painting. Often the scenes include weathered architecture, old boathouses, and seaside neighborhoods, including ones in Monterey Bay. "They offer a chance ➤

REFLECTED TRIO BY GREGORY STOCKS

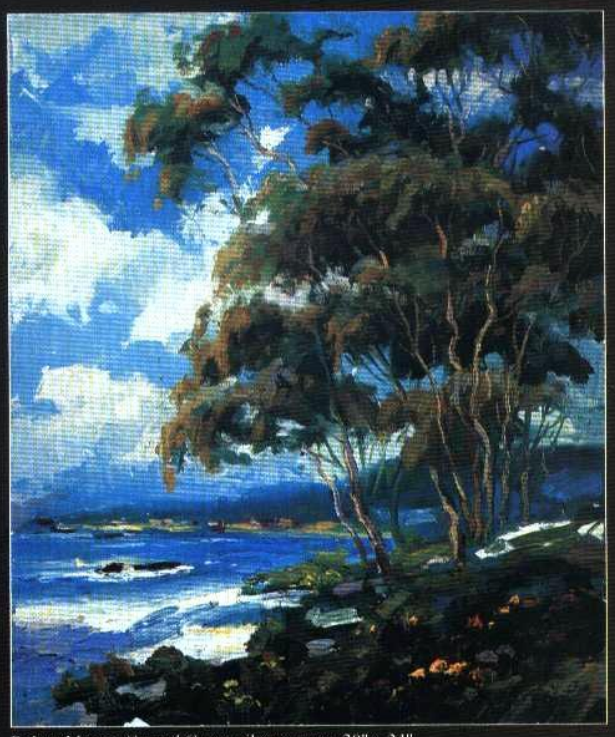
Gregory Stocks

Utah artist Gregory Stocks is fond of comparing the process of painting a landscape to writing a song. "There is a basic structure or rhythm to the work," explains Stocks, who discovered his talents in both music and drawing in grade school. "The melody comes into play in the form of color, brushwork, and the expressive possibilities of process." After high school and a short-lived stint with a rock band in Portland, OR, in the early 1980s, Stocks enrolled at Utah State University and focused on art classes, earning a bachelor's degree in illustration in 1986. Upon graduation, he opted for a career in graphic design while painting and drawing on the side. Gaining his first gallery representation in 1998, Stocks turned to painting full time in 2001 and now spends his time traveling across the West and bringing ideas back to his studio.

Although many of his landscapes are inspired by scenes from his travels, Stocks emphasizes that they are not exact representations. "I ➤



Jean Richardson, *Morning Promenade*, acrylic on canvas, 84" x 60"



Robert Moore, *Carmel Coast*, oil on canvas, 20" x 24"

Linda St. Clair, *Barefoot*, oil on canvas, 30" x 40"

ROBERT MOORE • JEAN RICHARDSON • LINDA ST. CLAIR

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EVENING AT THE WATERHOLE 25″ X 41″ OIL ON CANVAS

COYOTE WASH 47″ X 47″ OIL ON CANVAS

MARCH 10-22, 2006

PREVIEW EXHIBITION: WWW.WFINEART.NET

Bethanne Kinsella Cople continued

limits of her abilities and knowledge, she says. And being surrounded by natural wonders renews her spirit, an experience she hopes to convey to viewers in her paintings.

Last year Cople was juried into the Carmel Art Festival, and this year she looks forward to participating in a number of plein-air shows in the West. She is represented by Westbrook Galleries, Carmel, CA; Meyer Gallery, Park City, UT; Principle Gallery, Alexandria, VA; South Street Art Gallery, Easton, MD; Carmen's Gallery, Solomons Island, MD; and William Ris Gallery, Stone Harbor, NJ. *—Bonnie Gangelhoff*

Pang-Yen Chou continued

to create texture and capture the atmosphere of a place," he explains.

Chou is a regular participant in the Carmel Art Festival in Carmel, CA, and is a member of Oil Painters of America, American Plains Artists, and the Laguna Plein Air Painters Association. He is represented by Masterpiece Gallery, Carmel, CA. *—Bonnie Gangelhoff*

Gregory Stocks continued

kind of imagine landscapes—it's all from my head," he says. "Not places that I've seen, but places I would like to see." Stocks is represented by Gail Severn Gallery, Ketchum, ID; Jones & Terwilliger Galleries, Carmel and Palm Desert, CA; Basalt Gallery, Basalt, CO; A Gallery, Salt Lake City, UT; and Mountain Trails Gallery, Jackson, WY. *—Julie Osterman*

"Evensong" 84" x 54" Oil

Dan Gerhartz

One Man Show & Sale

Scottsdale, Arizona
Thursday, February 23, 2006
7:00–9:00pm

"From the Autumn Garden" 30" x 30" Oil

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Purple Field 36" x 48" (detail) Oil

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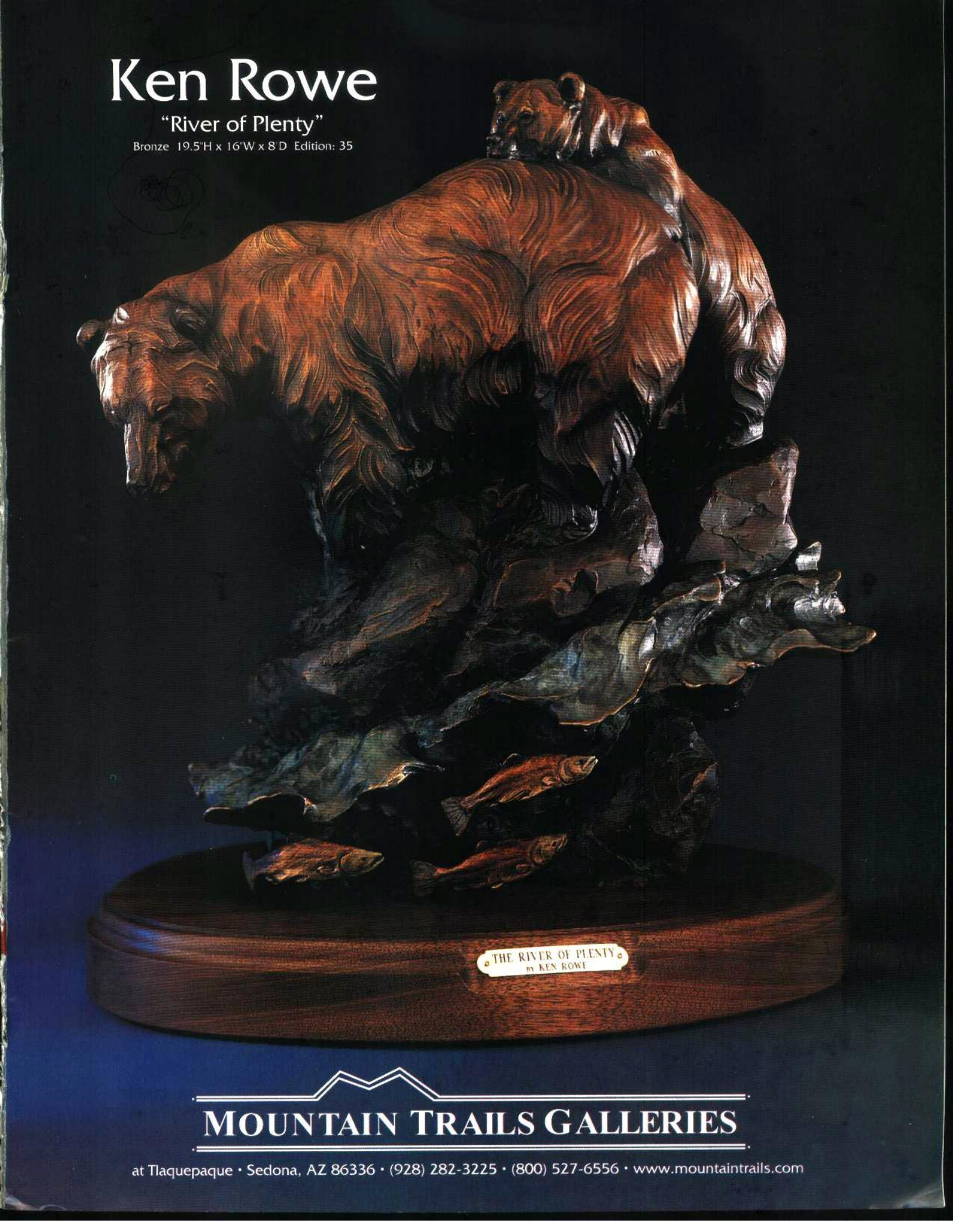
Ken Rowe

"River of Plenty"

Bronze 19.5"H x 16"W x 8"D Edition: 35



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On the Scene

REPORTS FROM ACROSS THE WEST

PROTECTORS OF THE CHEYENNE PEOPLE
BY HOWARD TERPNING

Great American West Sale Tops $1 Million

Settlers West Galleries' Great American West show earned total sales of more than $1.1 million, finding buyers for 75 of the 109 available works. The top lot of the sale, which was held in Tucson, AZ, in November, was Arizona painter **Howard Terpning**'s PROTECTORS OF THE CHEYENNE PEOPLE, which fetched $478,000 in a live auction. The rest of the works were sold in a fixed-price drawing. Highlights included **Robert Griffing**'s AT THE RIVER'S EDGE at $42,000; DISTANT SMOKE by **Roy Andersen** at $35,000; and **Bob Kuhn**'s CURIOSITY FED THE CAT at $21,000.

Iams Wins Best of Show

A portrait of a young cowgirl by **Richard Iams** called SEVENTH GENERATION received the Olaf Wieghorst Best of Show award at the Mountain Oyster Club Contemporary Western Art Show in Tucson, AZ, in November. **Bill Moomey** earned second-place honors for his painting COYOTES AT ➤

Out & About

Wildlife artist Bob Kuhn received the Los Olivos, CA-based Wildling Art Museum's Wilderness Spirit Award in October.... Pioneer Courage Sculpture Park in Omaha, NE, was dedicated in September. The park features work by Kent Ullberg, Blair Buswell, and Edward Fraughton.... Knowlton Fine Art & Jewelry recently opened in Lodi, CA. The gallery represents artists such as Gil Dellinger, Dan Peterson, and Jeanne Vodden.... The Best of Show award at the Bayou City Art Festival in Houston, TX, in October went to gourd artist John Gibson.... A 9/11 memorial sculpture by Sassona Norton was unveiled in Norristown, PA, in September.... Michael McClure earned Best of Show honors for his painting MORNING—LILY POND at a plein-air show at Keyes Gallery in Springfield, MO, in October.

In Memoriam

Montana painter **Paco Young** died in December after a yearlong battle with leukemia. He was 47. Inspired by frequent visits to Yellowstone, Grand Teton, and Glacier national parks, Young captured wildlife and landscapes *en plein air*. He participated in shows across the West, including the Western Rendezvous of Art and exhibitions at the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, the C.M. Russell Museum, and others. Young's images have been used in fund-raising efforts by conservation organizations such as Ducks Unlimited, the Ruffed Grouse Society, and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. Hundreds of emerging artists have been inspired through workshops conducted by Young and his wife, Toni.

LAST LIGHT BY PACO YOUNG

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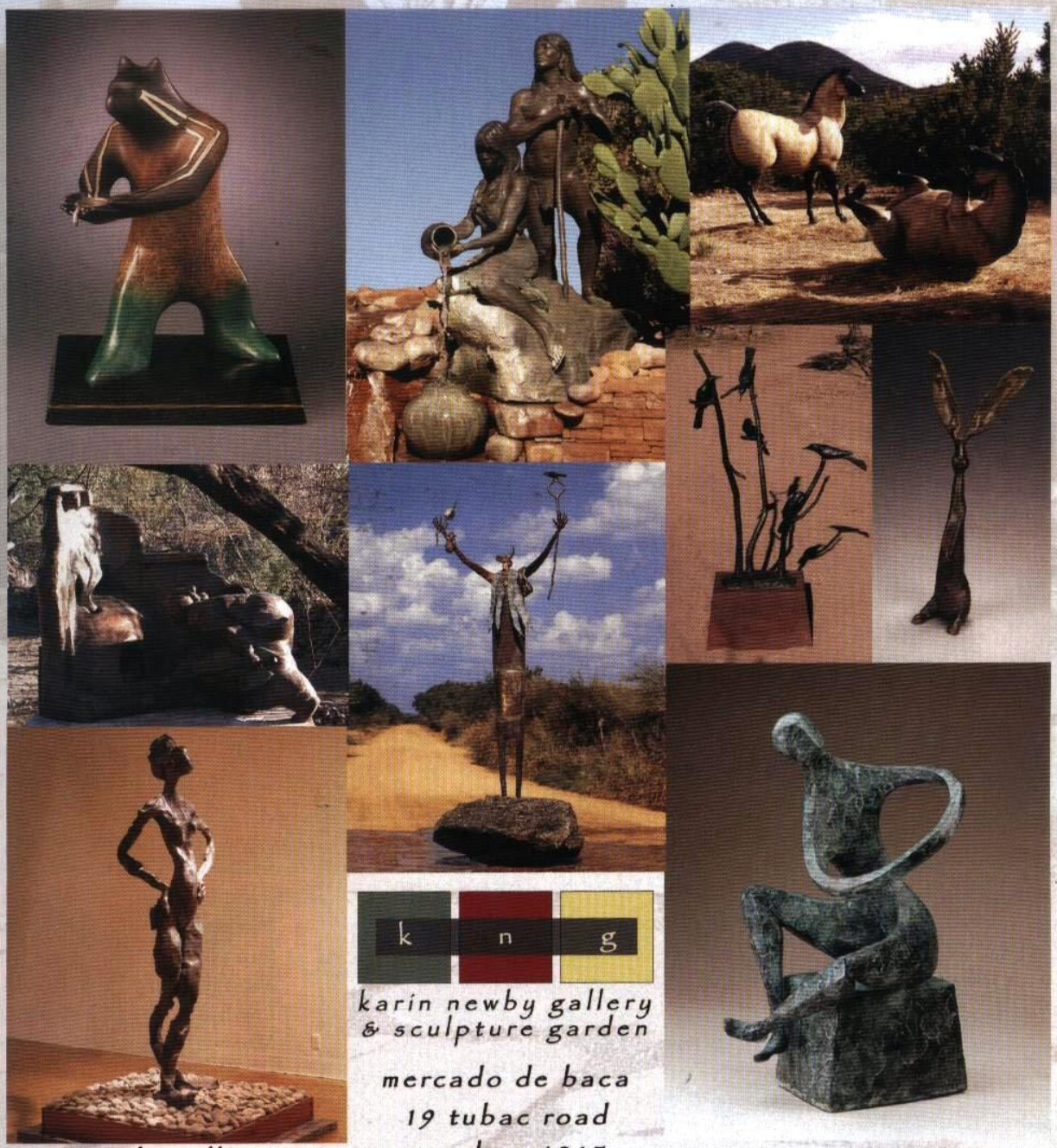

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"Joy"
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Mixed media on canvas

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THE DEN, and the club purchased **Deborah Copenhaver-Fellows'** bronze YOUTH WAS IN THE SADDLE THERE WITH HALF A WORLD TO RIDE. The show featured more than 350 pieces by 206 artists, and total sales reached $496,000.

Auction Results

Total sales at the Santa Fe Art Auction, held at the ELDORADO HOTEL in November, added up to $3,327,100. Featuring 286 lots, the auction found buyers for approximately 90 percent of the works. The top seller was **Charles M. Russell's** painting BLACKFEET AND SHOSHONE, which went for $370,000. Other highlights included **Joseph Henry Sharp's** INDIAN ENCAMPMENT (IN WINTER'S EMBRACE) and **R. Brownell McGrew's** REBECCA IN SUMMER, both fetching $170,000.

New Technology

Museums across the country are jumping on the podcasting bandwagon, offering visitors to their websites free downloads of educational audio presentations—generally accessible with an iPod, MP3 player, or computer software such as Windows Media Player, RealPlayer, or QuickTime. Most podcasts feature audio tours of exhibitions or commentary by curators, artists, critics, and conservators. Among the institutions currently providing podcasts are the **Museum of Modern Art** in New York, NY; the **San Francisco Museum of Modern Art** in California; the **Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum** in Canyon, TX; and the **Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art** in Indianapolis, IN. ❑

Please fax News Beat items to 713.850.1314 or e-mail them to josterman@aimmedia.com.

R. Keith McNay
"Scarlet Fields" Oil on Canvas

Mark Yale Harris
"Letting Go" Bronze ed. 12

Bob Chrzanowski
"A New Day" Oil Wash on Canvas

S. Pinto Souza
"Mountain Path" Acrylic on Canvas

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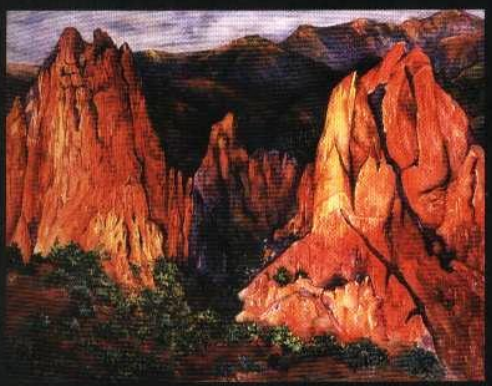
C. A. Smith
"Late in the Day" Oil on Canvas

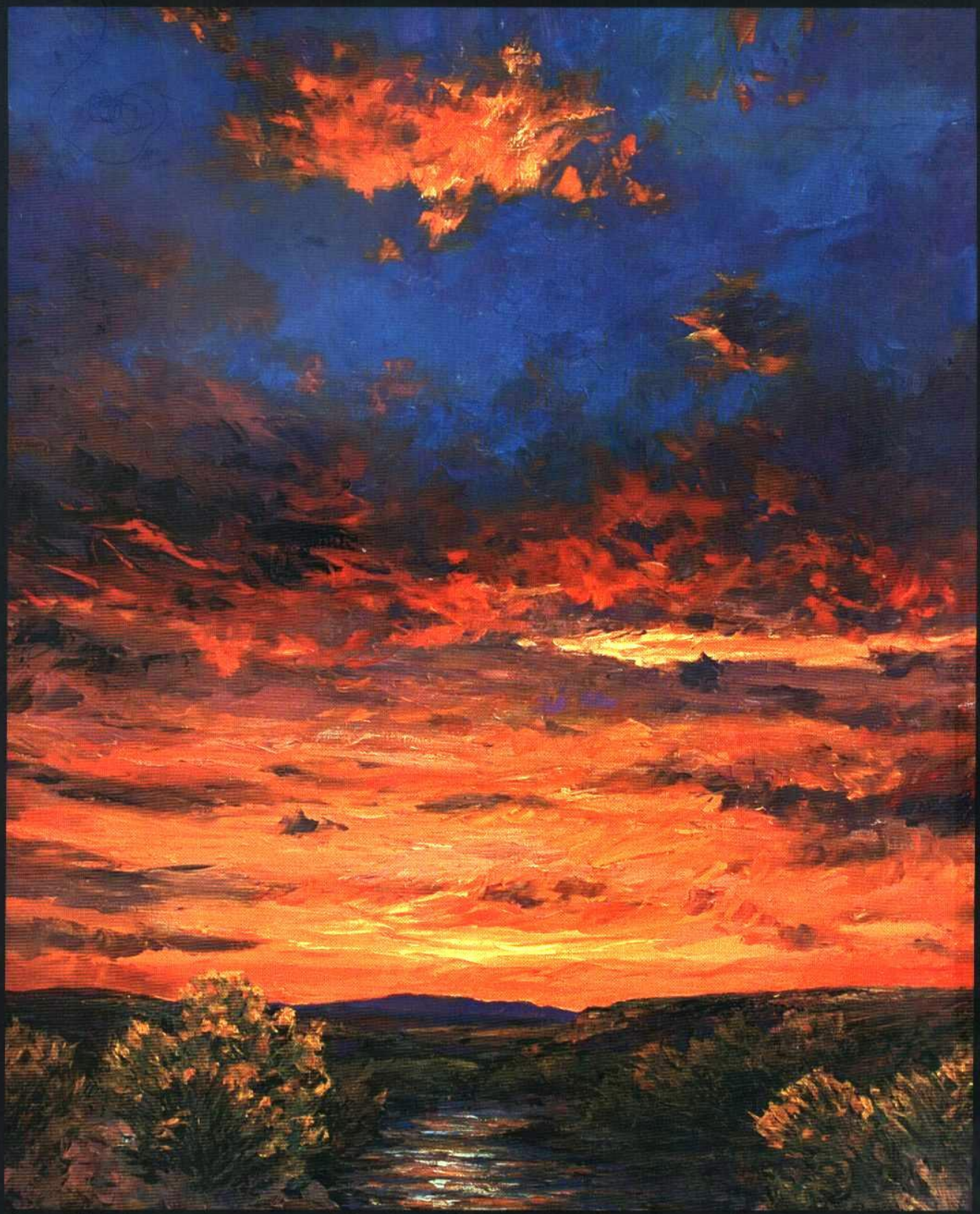


Barbara Jeffery Clay
"Garden of the Gods" Watercolor

Pat Moberley Moore
"The Seer" Bronze ed. 1/12

Maxine Graham Price
"Camino A Palenque" Oil on Canvas

Steven Boone



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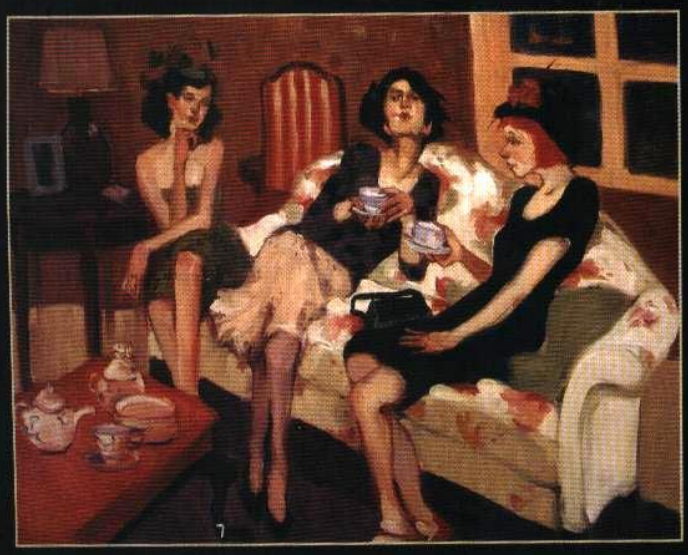
Street Violinist 16" x 11" Oil

LESLIE SANDBULTE - FEB. 18TH - MAR. 3RD



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Puttin' On The Ritz 24" x 24" Oil

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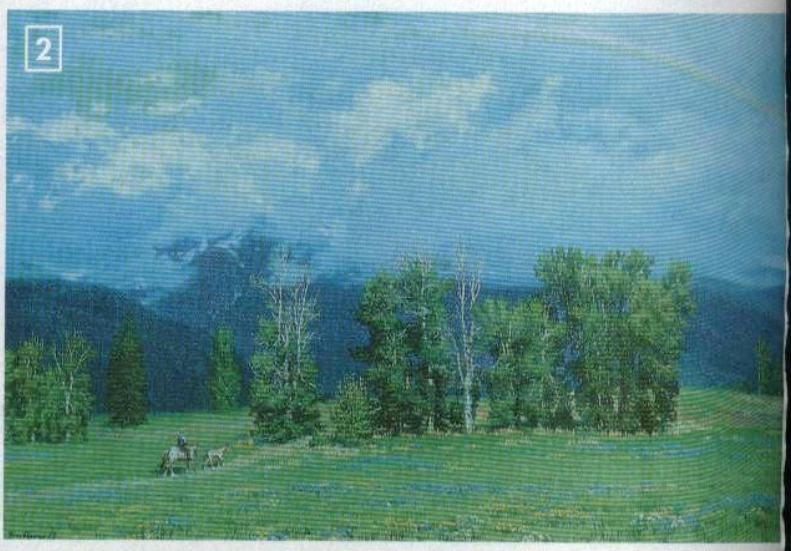

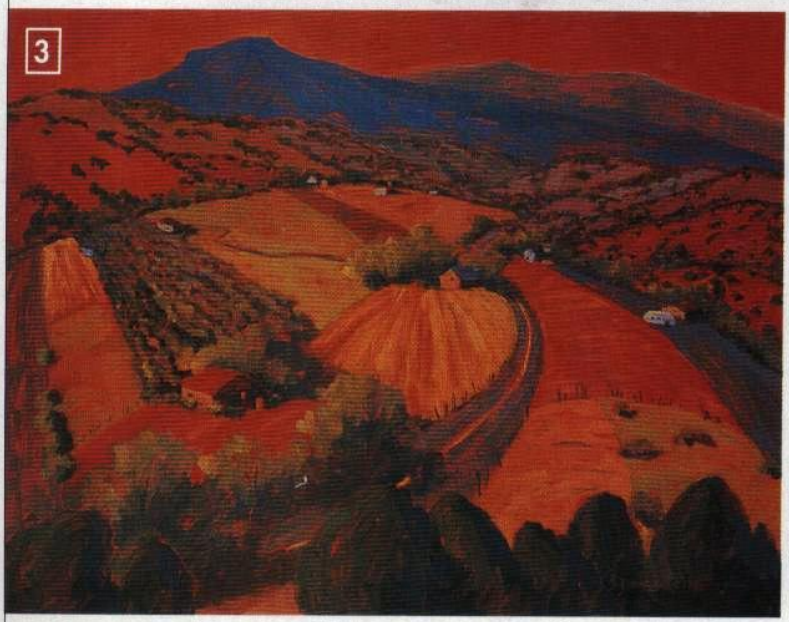

1 Jim Barker, Afternoon Delight, oil, 40 x 30.

A versatile artist, Jim Barker creates works in oil, watercolor, and clay. His recent landscapes reflect his love of the warm tones of the Southwest. "Capturing the ever-changing play of light and shadow excites the painter in me," says the Arizona-based artist. Barker is represented by El Prado Galleries, Sedona, AZ.

$4,500

2 Jin Huang, Spring Meander, oil, 24 x 36.

Western landscapes are the subject of choice for California painter Jin Huang, who came to America from China in 1984. A member of the Oil Painters of America, he won Best of Show at the organization's Central Regional Juried Exhibition in October. He is represented by Ponderosa Art Gallery, Hamilton, MT.

$3,900

3 Jean Shom, True North, oil, 24 x 30.

Colorado artist Jean Shom fills her landscape paintings with vibrant color and vigorous brush strokes. "Each of my paintings is an adventure into a new place for me—a journey initiated by an emotional response to the images and hues before me," she says. Shom is represented by Abend Gallery, Denver, CO.

$1,600

4 Kathryn Altus, Crossing at Mukilteo 3, oil, 36 x 36.

Depicting scenes of the Pacific Northwest near her home, Kathryn Altus' landscapes emerge abstracted on her canvases. "My wish is to transcend place and to address the interrelationship of nature and civilization," she says. Her works develop slowly—often taking more than a year to complete. Altus is represented by Lisa Harris Gallery, Seattle, WA.

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Eucalyptus, Santa Barbara Oil 16" x 20"

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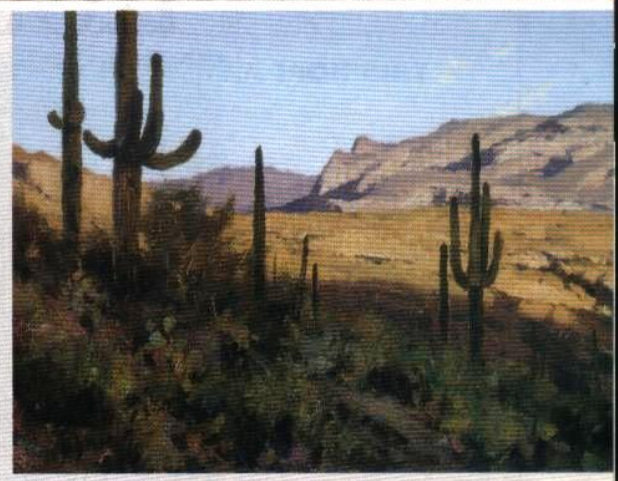
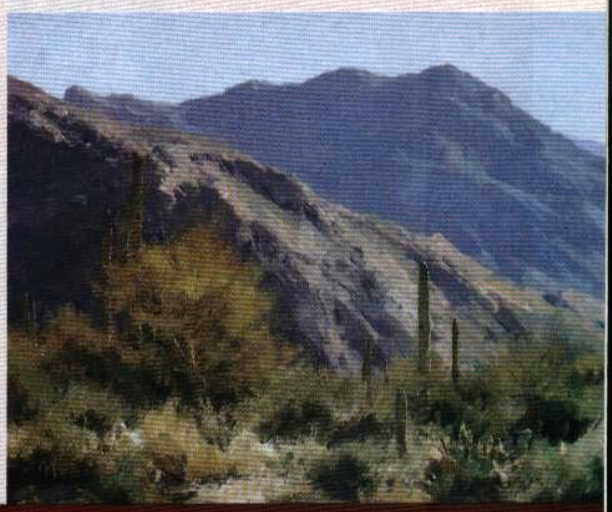


"Eldorado Falls" Oil 16 by 20 inches
"Big Water Vista" Oil 10 by 18 inches
"Fish Creek Overlook" Oil 18 by 24 inches
"East of Bartlett" Oil 16 by 20 inches



Matt Smith

February 13 - February 19, 2006
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Robert Albert

THIS HOPI ARTISAN, WHO IS ALSO KNOWN AS SAKHOMENEWA, SPECIALIZES IN KACHINA-DOLL CARVING BY DOTTIE INDYKE

ROBERT ALBERT LAUGHS HIS WAY through most workdays. Whittling away at the roots of cottonwood trees, the 41-year-old creates a veritable circus—clowns climbing from rooftops, tossing each other in the air, breaking piñatas, and falling off ladders. Some are grotesque, with protruding tongues, bulging eyes, and flabby ears; others, cuddling rag dolls and puppies, are pretty near irresistible.

The clowns are based on the characters of Hopi ceremony who, through their rude and bawdy behavior, teach the proper way to act. During summers on the Hopi reservation, villagers dress up as these striped comedians and intrude on the tribe's kachina dance by poking fun at everyone and everything. Each year they are rounded up and disciplined and they promise to clean up their act, but they never do.

For Albert, who grew up in the Third Mesa village of Moencopi in Arizona, the dances were enthralling. A mischievous kid who got into fights, played with matches, and ditched school, he found there was something about the clowns that resonated. But at 10, when he was inducted into the kachina society and granted access to tribal secrets, he left his childish ways behind, assuming the Hopi moniker, Sakhomenewa, given to him by his grandmother. She was a member of the tobacco clan and chose a name that meant "tobacco that has been laid out straight to dry."

Around that time, his uncle sat Albert down at the kitchen table with a knife and a piece of wood. Through high school, Albert carved and painted but struggled with academics. He planned to attend vocational school to become a truck driver or a carpenter, until a school counselor asked him what he enjoyed doing. Art had never occurred to him as an occupation, but with her support, in 1984 he enrolled at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe. As for so many Native artists, IAIA was a revelation, exposing him to traditional and contemporary work from dozens of American tribes. After graduation, he moved to Tucson and for a while supported himself as a painter.

"I was doing okay, but I wasn't making a lot of money," he admits. "Lots of people liked my paintings, which were of kachina dancers, but there was always something wrong with them—wrong size or wrong color."

WHEN AFTER FIVE YEARS HE DECIDED to focus entirely on carving, first on kachinas and then on clowns, the response was immediate. At his first Santa Fe Indian Market, Albert won second place in his category. He has received awards nearly every year since and, in 2004 at the Heard Museum's market, won best of classification and division. At these fairs, people flock to his work, drawn by the weird and endearing antics of his diminutive clowns. ➤

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"I really look at the faces as the center point of my carvings," Albert says. "When Hopi people see my work, it stops them. One of the best compliments is when they say, 'This looks like my uncle or my nephew.'"

Like the clowns of Hopi tradition, each of his carved figures has a reason for being. Some are inspired by everyday life at his home nowadays in Gallup, NM, by kids playing on a playground or something he has seen on TV. Sometimes they satirize politics, as with his sculptures sparked by the hanging chads of the 2000 presidential election. Often they come straight from Hopi lore, such as the clowns who set kachinas' hair on fire.

The shape and size of the raw wood help determine the character of each piece. Albert's work ranges from a single figure 5 inches in diameter to a group of seven figures that is more than a foot across. He is a slow carver, and the initial stage of removing wood with a belt sander, band saw, and grinders is the most time-consuming. Once the piece is pared down, he uses wood gouges, straight knives, and a wood burner—originally invented to craft duck decoys—to create wrinkles in skin, hair, and the fine details of clothing. To finish, he seals, sands, and paints with acrylics. The facial expression isn't decided until the last moment.

"The whole point is to make people laugh," Albert says. "If you can draw a crowd ... if you can stop people in their tracks and make them react, then, as far as I'm concerned, you're successful." ❑

Albert's work is shown at Grey Dog Trading Company, Kaibab Courtyard Shops, Bahti Indian Arts, and Silverbell Trading, all in Tucson, AZ, and the Heard Museum Shop, Phoenix, AZ.

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Father and Son Exhibition

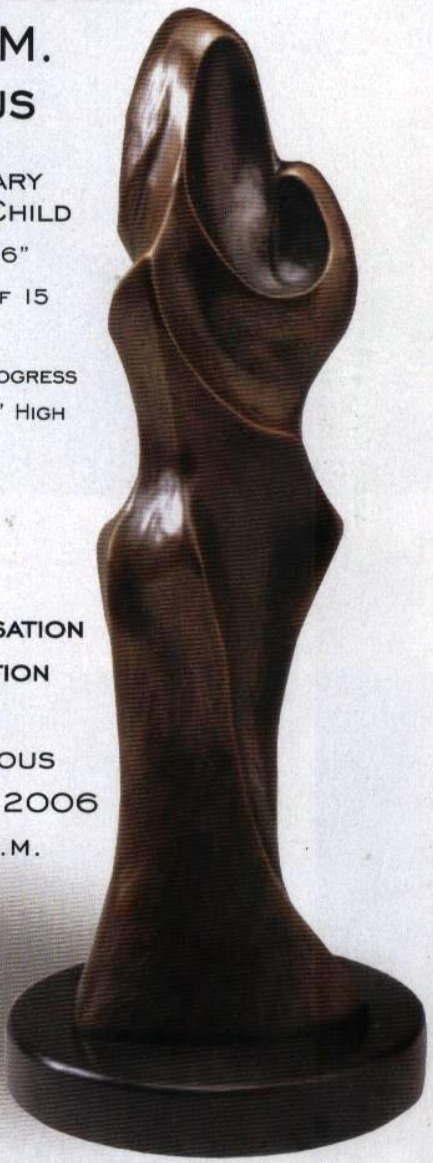
Champagne Reception
Saturday, March 4, 2006
5:00 – 8:00 P.M.

Allan Houser Haozous

They're Going Home
36" x 12" x 6"
Bronze Edition
of 12
© 1990

Phillip M. Haozous

Contemporary
Mother and Child
15.75" x 6" x 6"
Bronze edition of 15
© 2005
Enlargement in Progress
approximately 37" High



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Sunday, March 5, 2006
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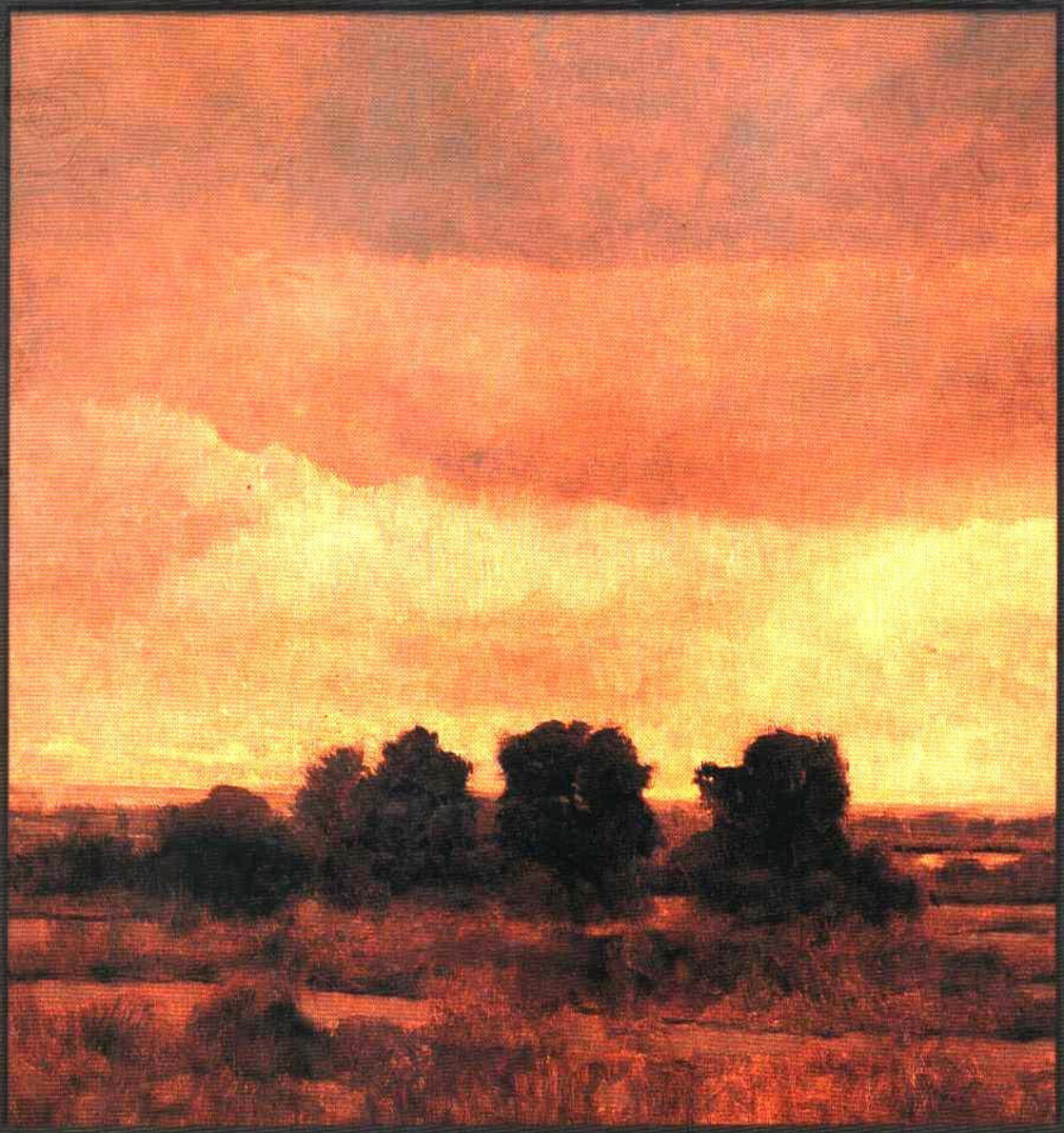

"Somber Evening" oil on linen 48"x 44"

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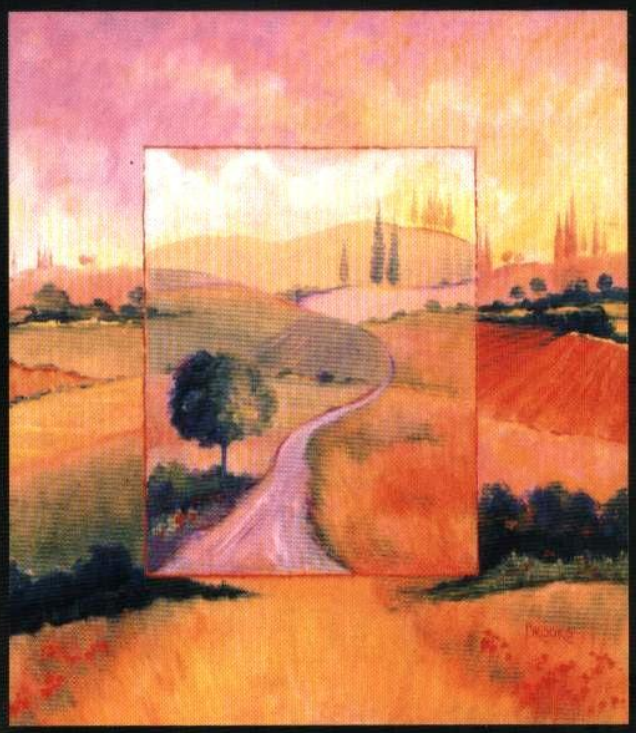

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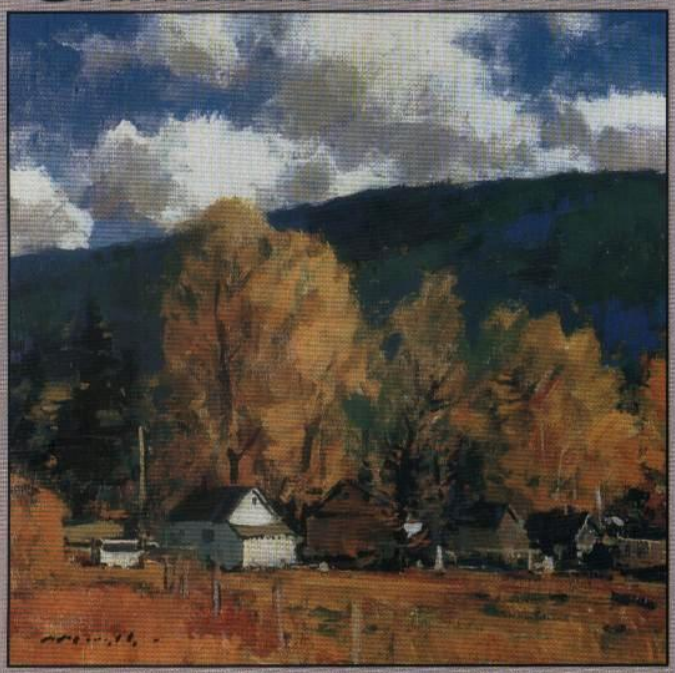

"Sierra Foothills", acrylic on canvas, 30" x 30"

MICHAEL OBERMEYER

"Near Point Lobos", oil on canvas laid down on board, 20" x 20"

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creations; and Joel Coplin's figurative paintings, which are often surrealistic in style. Also see works by Jim Myford, Casey McKee, Robert Palusky, Jamie Chase, and Christopher Pelley. An artists' reception is held on Thursday, February 9, from 6 to 9 p.m. The exhibition continues through March 31.

Focus, February 9-March 31, Larsen Gallery, 480.941.0900, www.larsengallery.com

Art Times Three

TUCSON.... New works by Sherry Blanchard Stuart, J.C. Dye, and Ken Fleisch are highlighted at El Presidio Gallery February 21-March 9 with an opening reception on Saturday, February 25, from 5 to 8 p.m. Stuart paints traditional western scenes of cowboys, Indians, and horses; Dye's bronzes are inspired by his life as a rancher and outdoorsman; and Fleisch's still lifes depict Native American pottery. On display through February 8 is a show for painters Louis Maestas, Paul Sheldon, and Sandra Brestel.

Sherry Blanchard Stuart, J.C. Dye, and Ken Fleisch, February 21-March 9/Louis Maestas, Paul Sheldon, and Sandra Brestel, through February 8, El Presidio Gallery, 800.487.7069, www.elpresidiogallery.com

Western Spirit

WICKENBURG.... Gold Nugget Art Gallery presents a show of paintings and sculptures by artists known for capturing the spirit of the West, with an opening reception on Tuesday, February 21, from 5 to 8 p.m. Participating artists include Santos Barbosa, Robin Palmer, Bill Nebeker, Fritz Rothermel, and Elk Woman.

Keeping the Spirit Alive, February 21-March 11, Gold Nugget Art Gallery, 928.684.5849, www.goldnuggetartgallery.com

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"Summer's Brightest Gift" 48" x 24" Oil/Canvas

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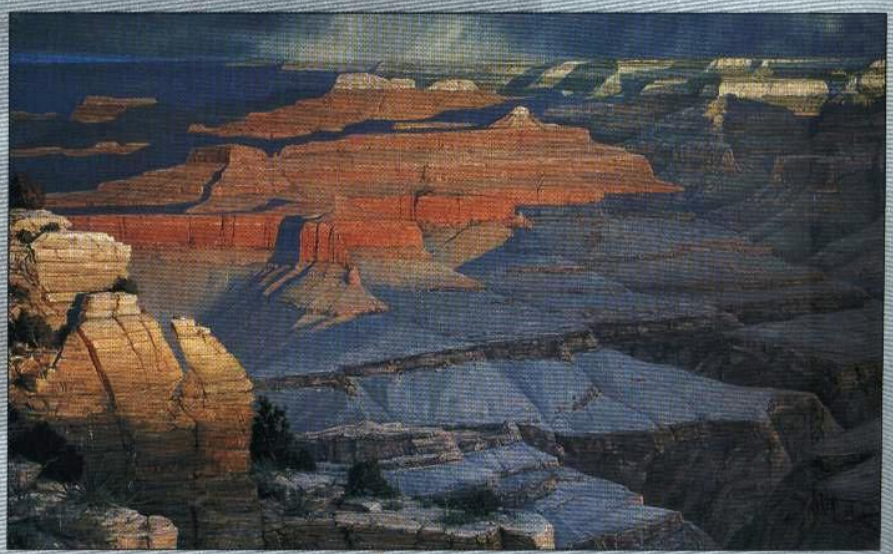

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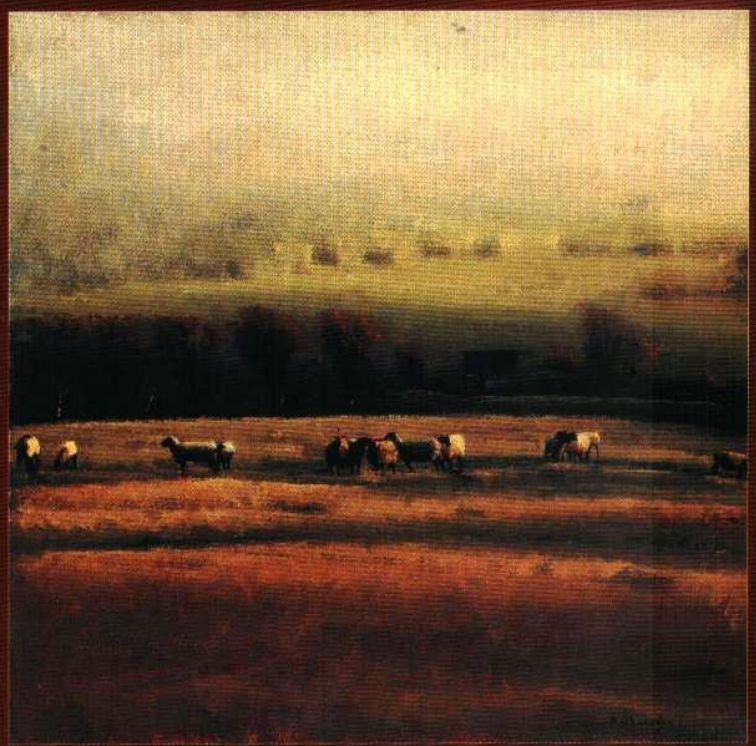
"Blackbird Oglala Lakota" 48" x 36" Oil

Greg Overton

One Man Show
February 3 - 10

Artist Reception: February 4, 5 to 9pm



"Fall Sheep" 24" x 24" Oil

Scott Richardson

One Man Show
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Artist Receprion: February 18, 5 to 9pm

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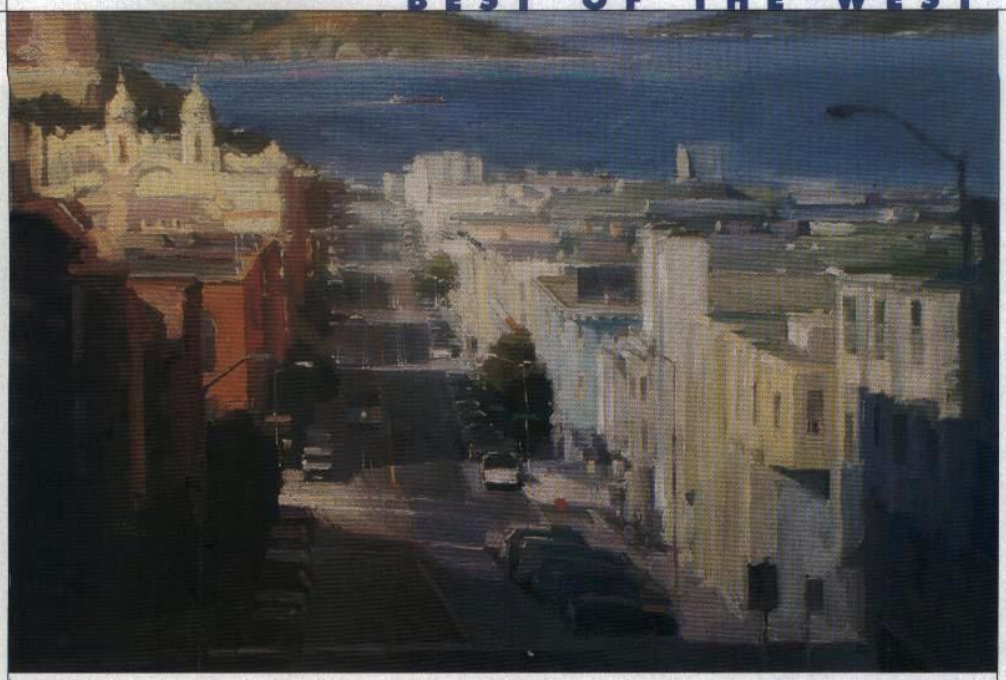


SAN FRANCISCO TREAT BY KEN AUSTER

Auster by the Bay

SAN FRANCISCO.... New paintings by Ken Auster are on view at Thomas Reynolds Gallery this month. Always interested in expanding his *oeuvre* and exploring new artistic ground, recently Auster has created large-scale cityscapes. The pieces capture San Francisco and its many visual allures, from the steep hills of downtown streets to the charming cafes in hidden alleys. In his new works, the Southern California artist stretches the limits of the representational style, pushing towards abstraction.

Ken Auster: S M L XL Paintings, through February 25, Thomas Reynolds Gallery, 415.441.4093, www.thomasreynolds.com

Beauty Revealed

CALISTOGA.... This month feminine beauty takes center stage in a show of new paintings by Neil Boyle, Ariana Richards, Michael Fitzpatrick, and William A. Schneider at Lee Youngman Galleries. The show presents a variety of styles and portrayals of women, including classic nudes, "working girls," mothers, and saxophone players. Meet the artists at a reception from 4 to 6 p.m. on February 4.

Viva La Femme!, February 4-28, Lee Youngman Galleries, 707.942.0585, www.leeyoungmangalleries.com

Masters Exhibit at the Autry

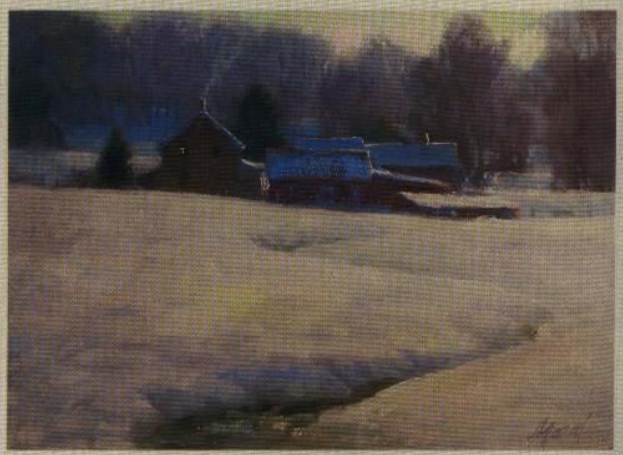
LOS ANGELES.... Top artists from around the country converge in the Golden State for the Autry Museum's annual *Masters of the American West Fine Art Exhibition and Sale* this ➤

Morel Views

PASADENA.... The annual show of works by Chris Morel is on view at Galerie Gabrie this month. The New Mexico-based landscape painter travels across the American West and Mexico to captures scenic views ranging from snow-covered mountains to evocative historic architecture. He has participated in numerous invitational shows throughout the country, including the annual Oil Painters of America national show. In 2002, Morel was featured as a *Southwest Art* "Artist to Watch." Meet the artist at a reception from 4 to 6 p.m. on February 7.

The Lure of the Landscape, February 7-March 4, Galerie Gabrie, 626.577.1223, www.galeriegabrie.com

For more event information, see page 146 or southwestart.com.
Written by Bonnie Gangelhoff.



WINTER AFTERNOON BY CHRIS MOREL

Chris Morel

2006 Exhibition at Galerie Gabrie:

The Lure of the Landscape

February 7 – March 4, 2006

Warm Willows 30" × 40" o/c

Entire exhibit available for immediate sale by contacting the gallery. Preview at www.gabrie.com

Galerie Gabrie 597 East Green Street, Pasadena, California 91101 • 626.577.1223

Tuesday through Saturday 10:30 to 5:00 jgabrie@earthlink.net

month. The exhibit presents stylistically and thematically diverse works, including wildlife, still-life, landscape, and figurative works. Paintings and sculptures by more than 70 artists are on display in a show that pays homage to the contemporary as well as the historic western experience. Oleg Stavrowsky, David Yorke, and Z.S. Liang are among this year's participating artists.

Masters of the American West Fine Art Exhibition and Sale, February 4-March 5, Autry Museum of Western Heritage, 323.667.2000, www.autry-museum.org

Everyday Life

BAKERSFIELD.... Southern California painter Sally Strand enjoys capturing intimate moments in everyday life. This month the Bakersfield Museum of Art features new works by Strand, including pastels and oils. Intrigued by what is commonplace but often goes unnoticed, she presents daily life, full of familiar people and objects—a man reading a morning newspaper, light falling across a bowl of eggs, and groups of people waiting, working, and playing.

Intimate Reflections of Everyday Life, through March 24, Bakersfield Museum of Art, 661.323.7219, www.bmoa.org

Animal & Human Treats

LODI.... New works by sculptor Roger Casillas are on view at Knowlton Gallery this month. Casillas creates playful ceramic sculptures incorporating animal forms into scenes of humans at work and play. The artist also is fond of making visual references to his Latino heritage through the use of cultural symbols and myths.

Natural Forms, February 3-28, Knowlton Gallery, 209.368.5123, www.knowltongallery.com

Heart OF THE West

ART EXHIBITION AND SALE

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Tracy W. Avant
Jane A. DeDecker
Patricia Dobson
Deborah Copenhaver Fellows
Glenna Goodacre
Veryl Goodnight
Lisa Gordon
Sherry Harrington
Donna Howell-Sickles
Joyce Lee
Sherrie McGraw
Terri Moyers
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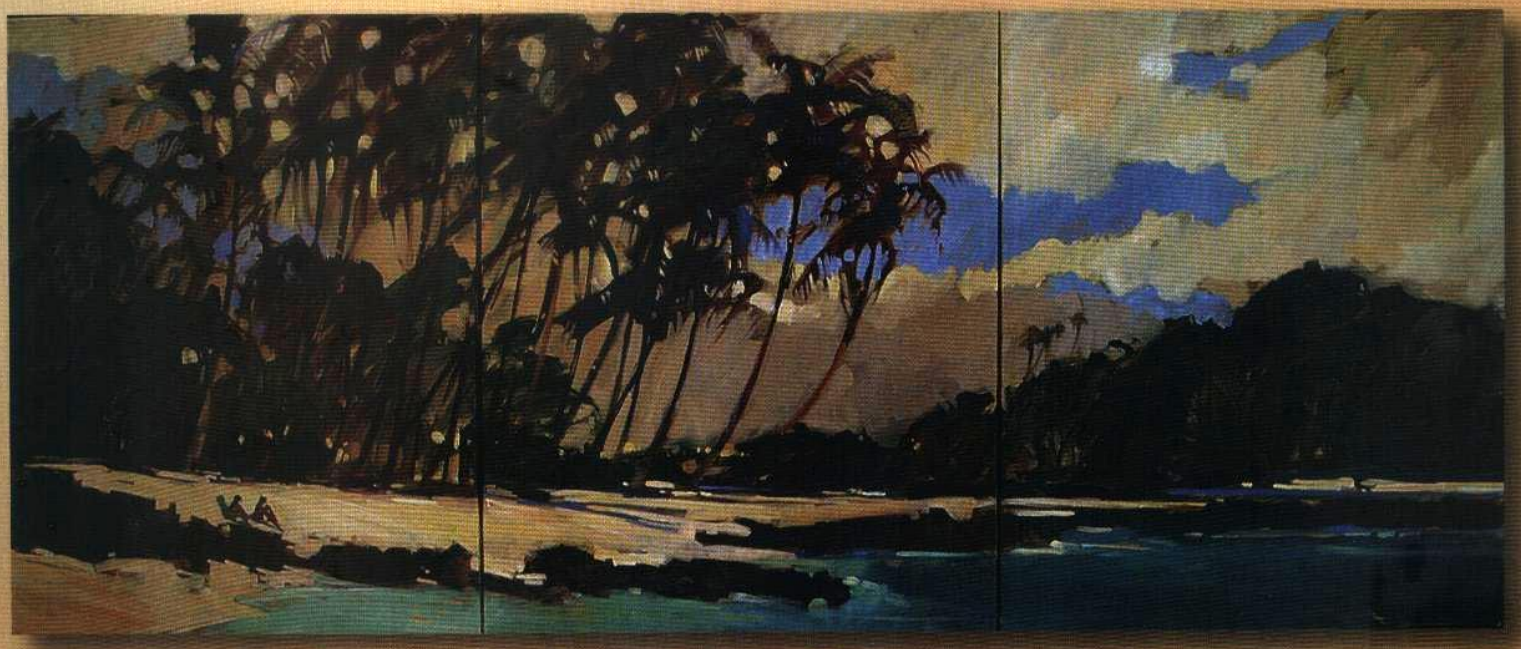

Paradise Panorama, 24x72, 3 panel

Hear the Quietness, 30x40

California Vineyards, 24x36

Meet the Artist:
Feb.19th, 2006 Maui Plein Air Invitational,Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua, Maui
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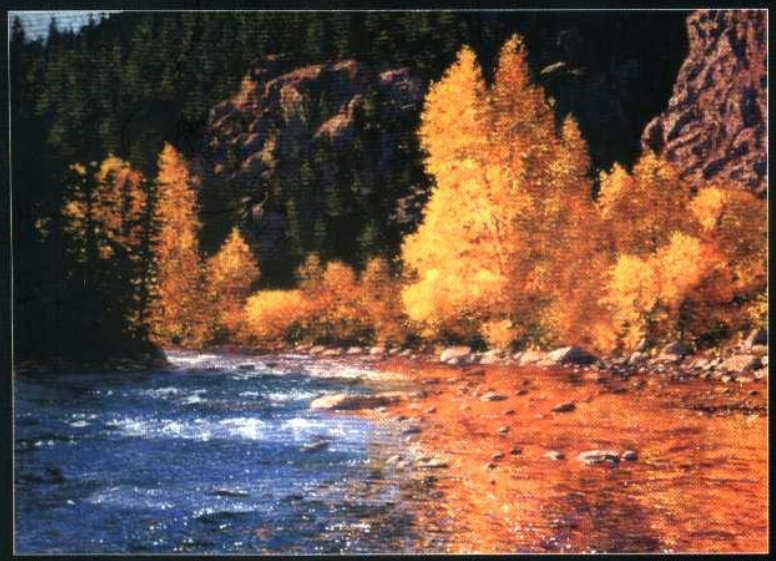

"Pecos Canyon, Autumn" acrylic 30" x 40"

David Foley

"Iteration Detail 8" acrylic 48" x 48"

Rita Roberts, opa

"Day's Departure" oil 20" x 40"

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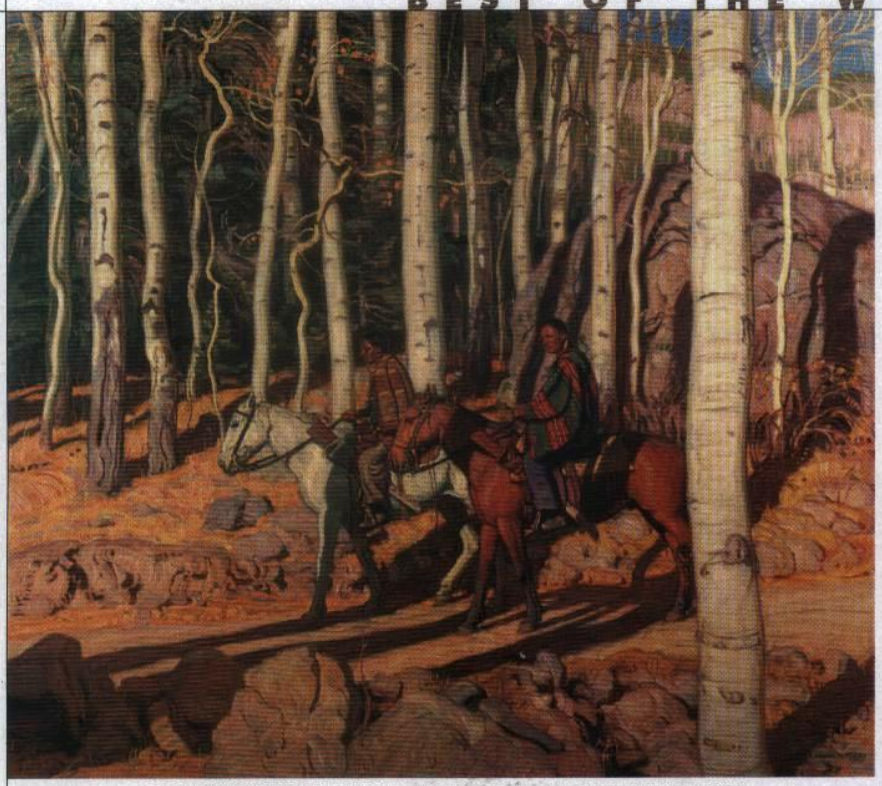

INDIAN HUNTERS AMONG ASPEN BY E. MARTIN HENNINGS

Back to the Past

TAOS.... More than 20 paintings by the six founding members and two of the active members of the famed Taos Society of Artists are on view in *The Stark Legacy*, an exhibit continuing through July 23 at the Taos Art Museum. The paintings are on loan from the Texas-based Stark Museum of Art. On display are works by Joseph H. Sharp, Bert G. Phillips, Ernest L. Blumenschein, E.I. Couse, Oscar E. Berninghaus, Herbert Dunton, Victor Higgins, and E. Martin Hennings. Sharp first visited Taos on a sketching trip in 1883, and is considered the artist who sparked Taos' reputation as an art town. While later studying in Paris, he told Phillips and Blumenschein about Taos, and they arrived in 1898, staying longer than planned when their wagon wheel broke. Blumenschein next told Couse of the mystical, mountainous region, inspiring him to come. With the arrival of Berninghaus and Dunton, the group numbered six, and in 1915 the first meeting of the renowned Taos Society of Artists convened. Taos today—a town of about 6,000—has been estimated to have more artists per capita than any other city in the world.

The Stark Legacy, through July 23, Taos Art Museum, 505.758.0685, www.taosartmuseum.org

At Daybreak

SANTA FE.... For Vermont-based artist Mallory Lake, the Tuscan hills of Italy are the place and dawn is the time when she found the inspiration for her newest pastels. "The light is a dim gray, and the olive trees and distant landscape seem flat, colorless. A heavy mist settled in the valley overnight and the autumn air is chilly. I wipe the dew from the windshield and set out for the country before the soft rays of sunlight rise above the hill," Lake wrote one morning in Tuscany not too long ago. She observed, "As the sun rises higher in the sky, so does the mist. Colors and contrasts intensify and the same abandoned villa that was touched by a sliver of warm yellow a short while ago will soon be drenched in a brilliant light where nothing is left to the imagination." Lake has been traveling to Italy since 1995 to make photographic studies of the landscape. Her new show of Tuscan paintings, called Into the Italian Dawn, opens at Martha Keats Gallery on February 19 with a reception at 5 p.m.

Mallory Lake: Into the Italian Dawn, February 19-March 17, Martha Keats Gallery, 505.982.6686, www.marthakeatsgallery.com

URBANA, VENETO BY MALLORY LAKE

For more event information, see page 150 or southwestart.com. Written by Wolf Schneider.

Apple Orchard, oil on canvas, 30 x 34 inches

Walt Gonske

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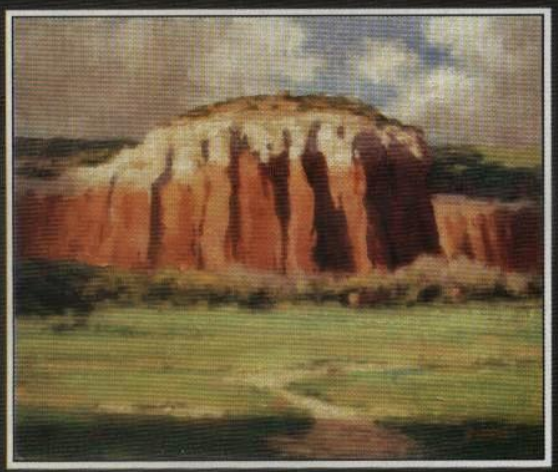
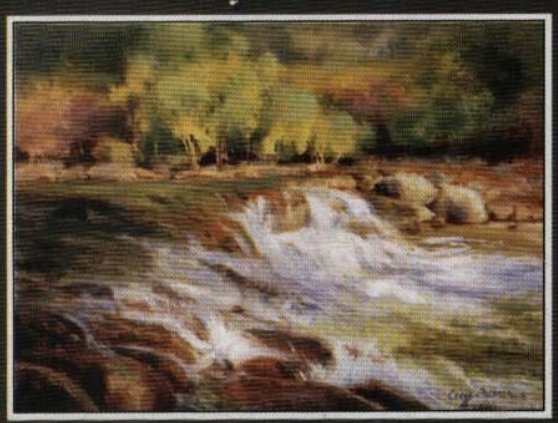
David Moreland Bates



"Ghost Ranch" · oil 10"x 12"

Cecy Turner



"Morning On Boulder Creek" · oil 9"x 12"

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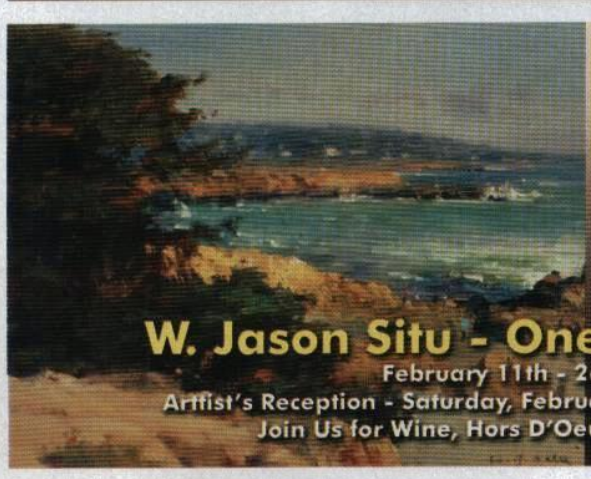

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W. Jason Situ - One Man Show

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Artist's Reception - Saturday, February 11th, 2006 6-9pm

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Paint the Town

SANTA FE.... The ninth annual ART Feast takes place February 23-26, with 30 art galleries and 30 restaurants collaborating on Friday night's Edible Art Tour. A wine tasting takes place on Saturday, followed by a multi-course repast with bidding on painted plates at the Gourmet Dinner & Children's Plate Auction on Saturday night. On Sunday, festivities wrap up with an Artists' Brunch and Art of the Home Tour. It all benefits art programs in Santa Fe's public schools.

ART Feast, February 23-26, 505.603.4643, www.artfeast.com

The Quest

SANTA FE.... For seven decades Elmer Schooley has been pursuing the reality of the natural world in his paintings. His vignettes of the landscape near his home in Roswell, NM, focus on the structural organization of the picture plane. Now, on February 17, Meyer-Munson Gallery opens a show of new and classic works by this American master on his 90th birthday with a reception at 5 p.m.

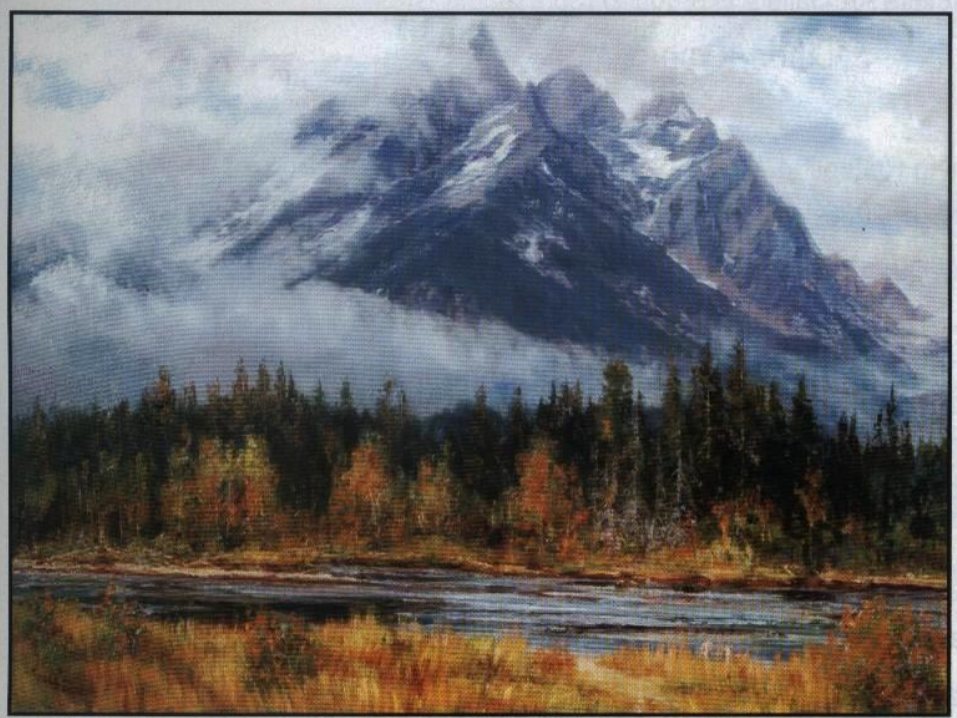
Elmer Schooley: A 90-Year Celebration, February 17-March 17, Meyer-Munson Gallery, 505.983.1657, www.munsongallery.com

Naturally Native

SANTA FE.... A selection of Roy Lichtenstein's work that drew inspiration from Native American symbols, motifs, and themes is on display in a new exhibit called *American Indian Encounters*. Opening concurrently is *Native Pop*, a collection of contemporary Native art informed by pop culture. Both shows open at the Museum of Fine Arts on February 3.

Roy Lichtenstein: American Indian Encounters/Native Pop, February 3-April 23, Museum of Fine Arts, 505.476.5072, www.mfasantafe.org

REFLECTION GALLERY



KAROL MACK
Cathedral Mist
30" x 40"
oil on board

MARTY RICKS
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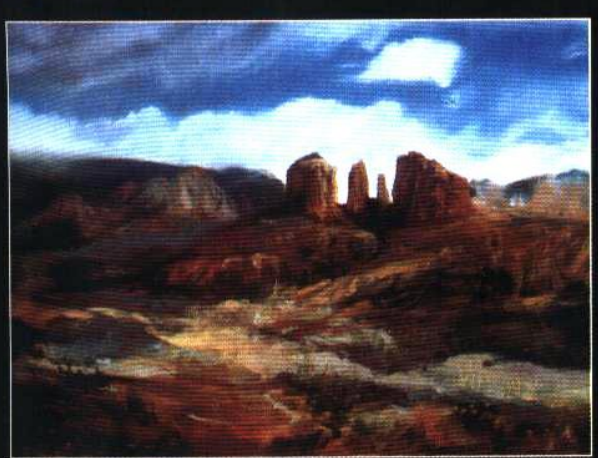


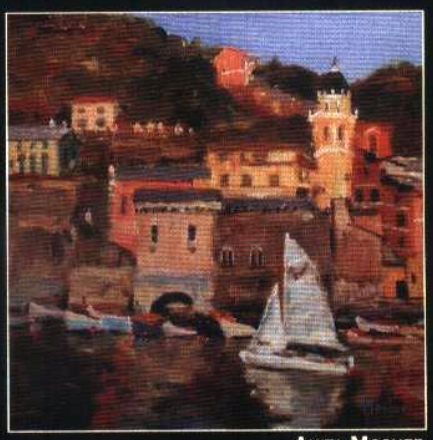
WES HYDE

Join the PAAC

Two Colorado-based plein air groups have merged into one international organization, Plein Air Artists Colorado (PAAC), headquartered in Denver. The 7 founders share a vision to create opportunities for artists of every level of experience. Member benefits include annual juried shows, website links, shared national advertising, product discounts, news and tips. Please visit the PAAC website for our weekly and monthly paint out schedules.

For More Information About PAAC And Our Show In August 2006, Please Visit Us At

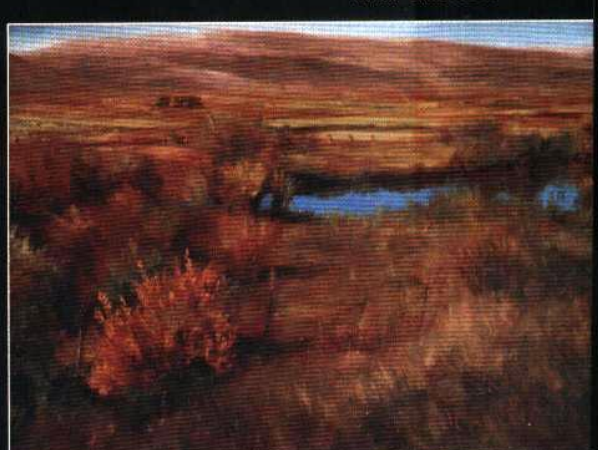
www.pleinairartistscolorado.com



ANITA MOSHER

FRAN GOTTLIEB

LYNN SIMONSON



MARK COULTER

Leslie Williams Cain, February 3-25, Davidson Contemporary, 206.624.7684, www.davidsongalleries.com

Matisse Prints

SEATTLE, WA.... Greg Kucera Gallery presents prints by Henri Matisse this month. The show includes a selection of more than 20 etchings and lithographs spanning Matisse's artistic career, including prints from the famous Jazz series from 1947. Most of the works are portraits depicting women who were close to the artist. The pieces, created with black ink on rice paper, are drawn in Matisse's persuasive linear style and feature a fluid use of line and pattern which bring the images to life. The Jazz works, on the other hand, are brilliantly colored, suggesting the vibrancy of the artist's cut-out collage works.

Henri Matisse, February 16-April 1, Greg Kucera Gallery, 206.624.0770, www.gregkucera.com

Magnificent Yellowstone

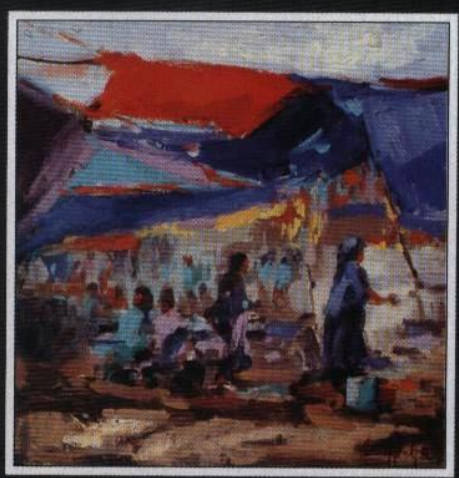
SPOKANE, WA.... Yellowstone National Park has lured generations of landscape painters, including explorer-artists such as Thomas Moran, Albert Bierstadt, and Thomas Hill. This month the Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture presents an exhibition of more than 70 paintings, prints, and drawings that depict the beauty and magnificence of the national park. The exhibit explores the park's rich visual history, including its status as an icon of preservation as well as the contested land that it has become in more recent years.

Drawn to Yellowstone: Artists in America's First National Park, through February 19, Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture, 509.456.3931, www.northwestmuseum.org

LaNell Arndt O.P.A.

oil 12" x 12"

"San Miguel Market"



oil 12" x 12"

"Market Day"

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Gary Gist (*b.* 1939)
"Rite of the Corn Maidens–Isleta Pueblo"
oil on canvas, 14 x 18

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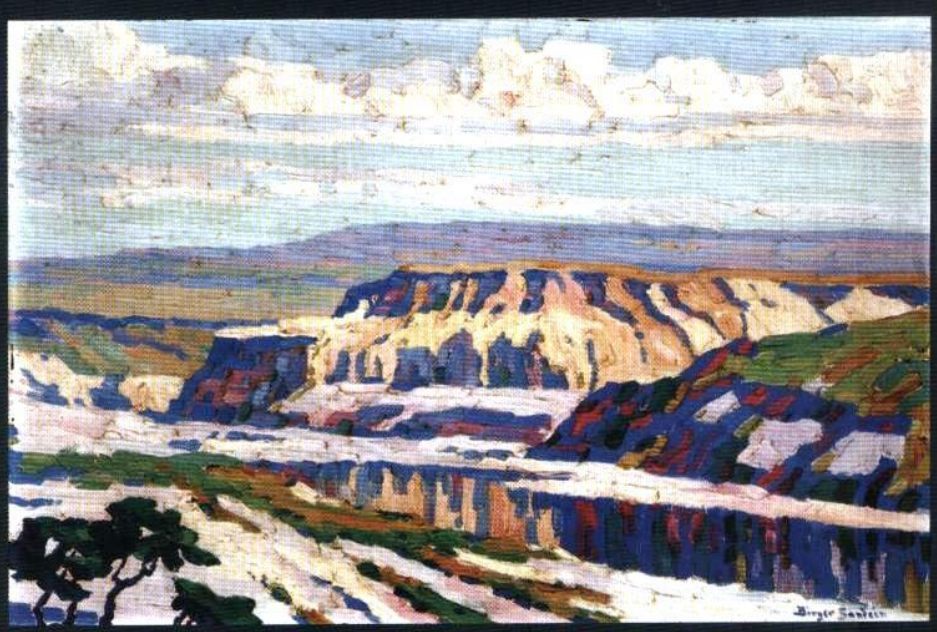

Birger Sandzen, *On the Wild Horse Creek*
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Southwest Art - Artist to Watch 2006

"Two Juniper Ridge" 36" x 48"

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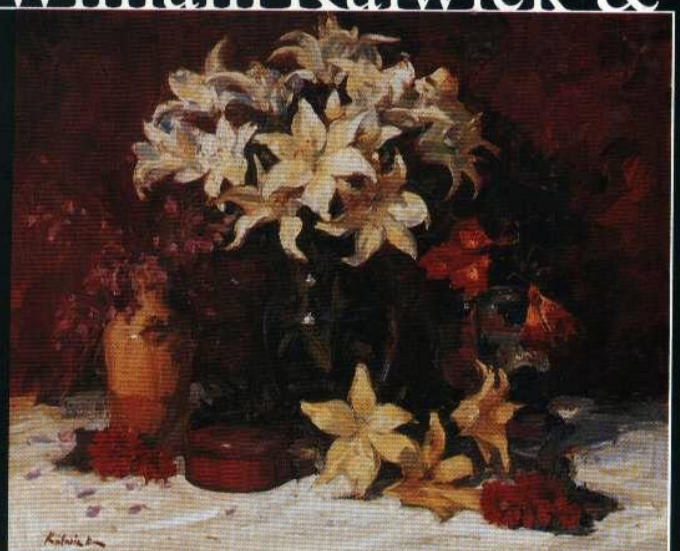

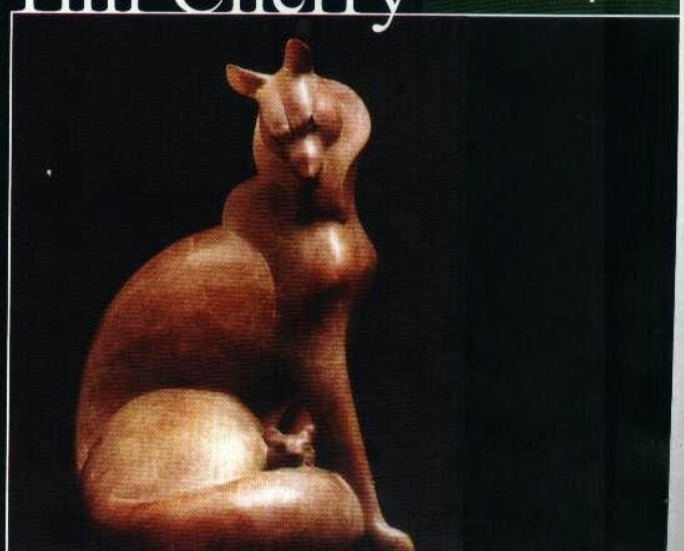

To view images of the show please visit our website at www.thesylvangallery.com

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Dixie Invitational Show

ST. GEORGE, UT.... More than 90 artists hailing from Utah and across the Southwest gather at the Dixie State College of Utah this month for the Sears Dixie Invitational Art Show and Sale. The 19th annual show features 175 works created in oil, watercolor, pastel, bronze, and other media. Participating artists include Ron Rencher, Royden Card, Laura Mann, Alexander Selytin, Sharon Jewkes, Barbara Summers Edwards, Glen Edwards, Bonnie Conrad, L'Deane Trueblood, Karl Thomas, Richard Miles, and Kate Starling. A preview reception and gala dinner kicks off the event's festivities on Friday, February 17, at 4 p.m. The exhibition opens to the public on February 18 and remains on display through March 24.

Sears Dixie Invitational Art Show and Sale, February 17-March 24, Sears Art Gallery at the Dixie State College of Utah, 435.652.7905, www.dixie.edu

Wildlife Celebration

JACKSON, WY.... Trailside Galleries hosts a celebration of wildlife paintings this month. The show spotlights major wildlife works in a variety of styles. More than 150 pieces by 12 painters are on view. Among the participating artists are Lindsay Scott, Jim Morgan, Bonnie Marris, Chad Poppleton, Ralph Oberg, and Kyle Sims. The exhibition also highlights new works painted left-handed by Nancy Glazier.

Wildlife Show, February 1-28, Trailside Galleries, 307.733.3186, www.trailsidegalleries.com

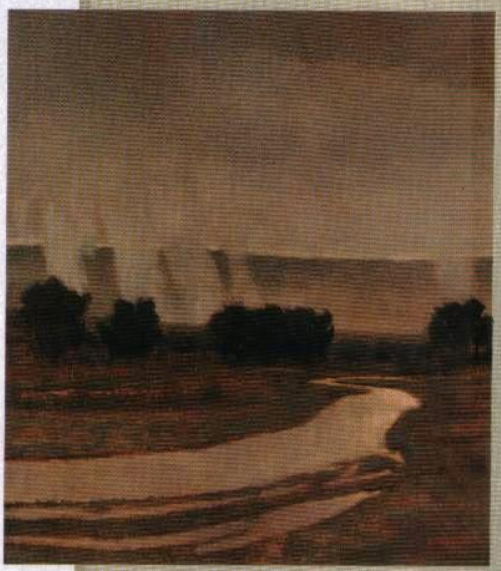
For more event information, see page 153 or southwestart.com.

Written by Bonnie Gangelhoff & Julie Osterman.

Tonalist Scenes

DENVER, CO.... **New paintings by Peter Campbell are on view at Angler Art this month. Campbell is known for moody, tonalist scenes that evoke a sense of mystery and melancholy. He is inspired by legendary painters such as James M. Whistler, Albert P. Ryder, and George Inness, but he considers his work a modern departure from the earlier styles. Some of Campbell's paintings are completed on location, while others are reworked in the studio. Meet the artist at receptions on February 10 from 5 to 9 p.m. and February 11 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

Peter Campbell, February 1-28, Angler Art, 303.333.7600, www.anglerart.com



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Home Sweet Home

DENVER, CO.... Colorado artists John K. Harrell, Kit Hevron Mahoney, and Anita Mosher present new paintings at Brushstrokes Studio-Gallery this month. The show celebrates the gallery's third anniversary and focuses on paintings spotlighting the natural and man-made wonders of the state. Meet the artists at the opening reception on February 25 from 5 to 9 p.m. The show continues through March 25.

There's No Place Like Home: Colorado, February 25-March 25, Brushstrokes Studio-Gallery, 303.871.0800, www.brushstrokesstudio.com

Trio of Shows

PARK CITY, UT.... Mountain Trails Gallery highlights new work by three painters this month. A show for Greg Overton hangs February 3-10, with a reception on Saturday, February 4; Scott Richardson's work is on view February 16-21, with a reception on Saturday, February 18; and Keith Bond is the featured artist February 23-28, with a reception on Saturday, February 25.

Greg Overton, February 3-10/Scott Richardson, February 16-21/Keith Bond, February 23-28, Mountain Trails Gallery, 435.615.8748, www.mountaintrailsgalleries.com

In Her Dreams

KETCHUM, ID.... Washington artist Judith Kindler creates mixed-media pieces using photographs, encaustic, oils, and more. A collection of the artist's new work is on view at Anne Reed Gallery through March 5. An opening reception takes place on February 17 from 6 to 9 p.m.

Judith Kindler: The Dreams, through March 5, Anne Reed Gallery, 208.726.3036, www.annereedgallery.com

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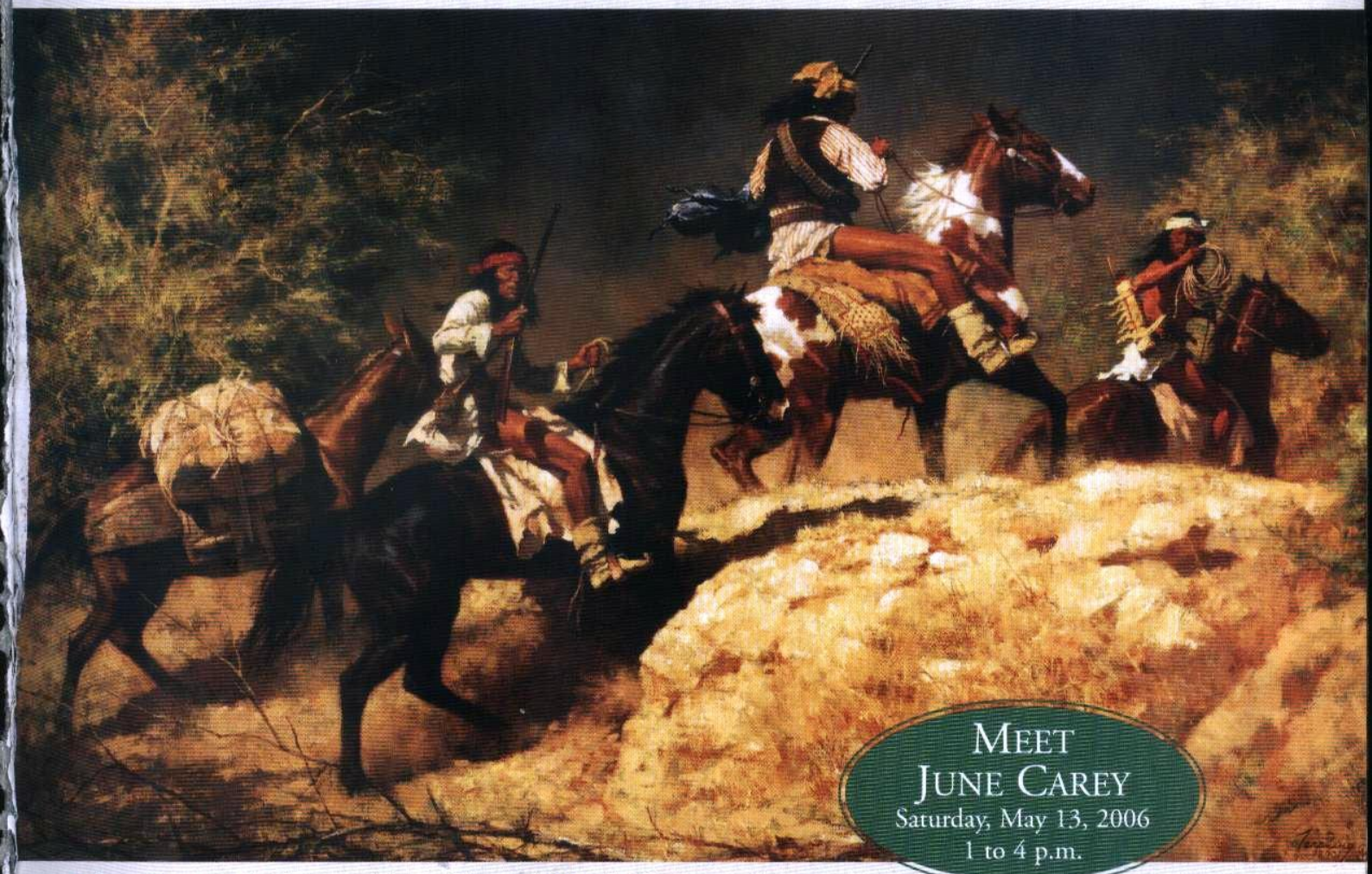

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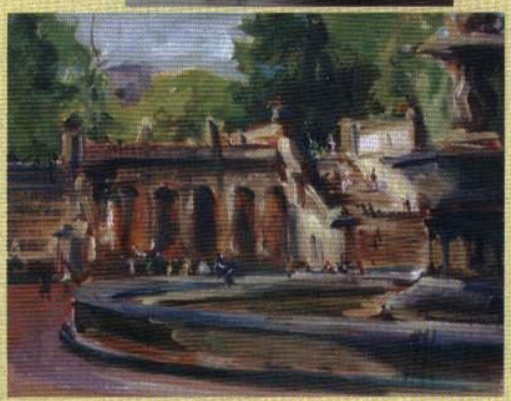

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MICHAEL SHANKMAN paints San Francisco

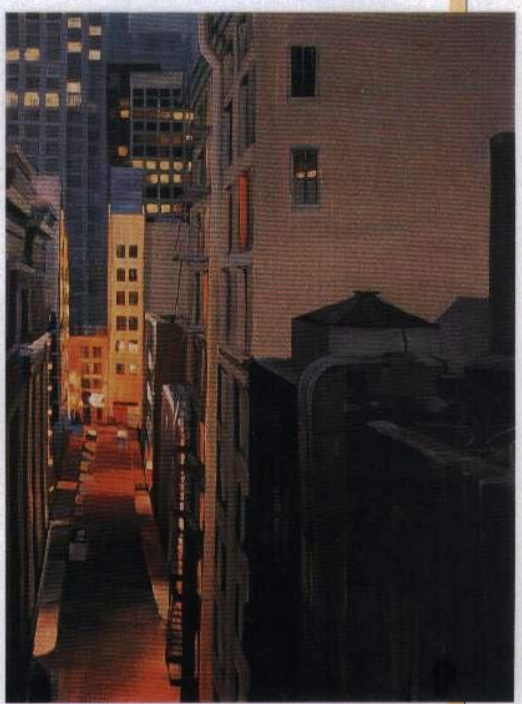
SAN FRAN NOIR

like the cover of a mystery novel

BY TODD WILKINSON

MICHAEL SHANKMAN WATCHES THE STREET LAMPS of San Francisco flicker to life. He waits for them to begin glowing at sundown. Every day, as the world turns, he observes the way the beams of natural and artificial light meet in converging trajectories. "As these sources of light intermingle, they elucidate a point of time and place that I and six billion others call home," the precocious 26-year-old points out.

Shankman's paintings, based on such thoughts, have been compared to film noir. In his interpretations of the gritty metropolis, dusk assumes the vocabulary of a Raymond Chandler potboiler; the straight-lined geometry of the built environment melts into soft-edged David Lynch-ian shadows; people appear and then pass through the nocturnal squall like characters drawn from Edward Hopper's insomnial masterpiece NIGHTHAWKS.



Although noir by definition implies danger, grimy malevolence, and murk, Shankman courts a different mood in his adopted home by the sea. His portrayals of urban reality are tonally soothing, almost evanescent, and provocatively architectural.

"One of the most striking things about his work is the perspective and the sophisticated way that he discerns the forces of light," says Nathan Smith-Klein of Smith-Klein Gallery in Boulder, CO. Shankman may be a youthful descendant of post-modernists and abstract expressionists and illustrative visionaries like Hopper, but age hasn't lessened his impact, Smith-Klein maintains.

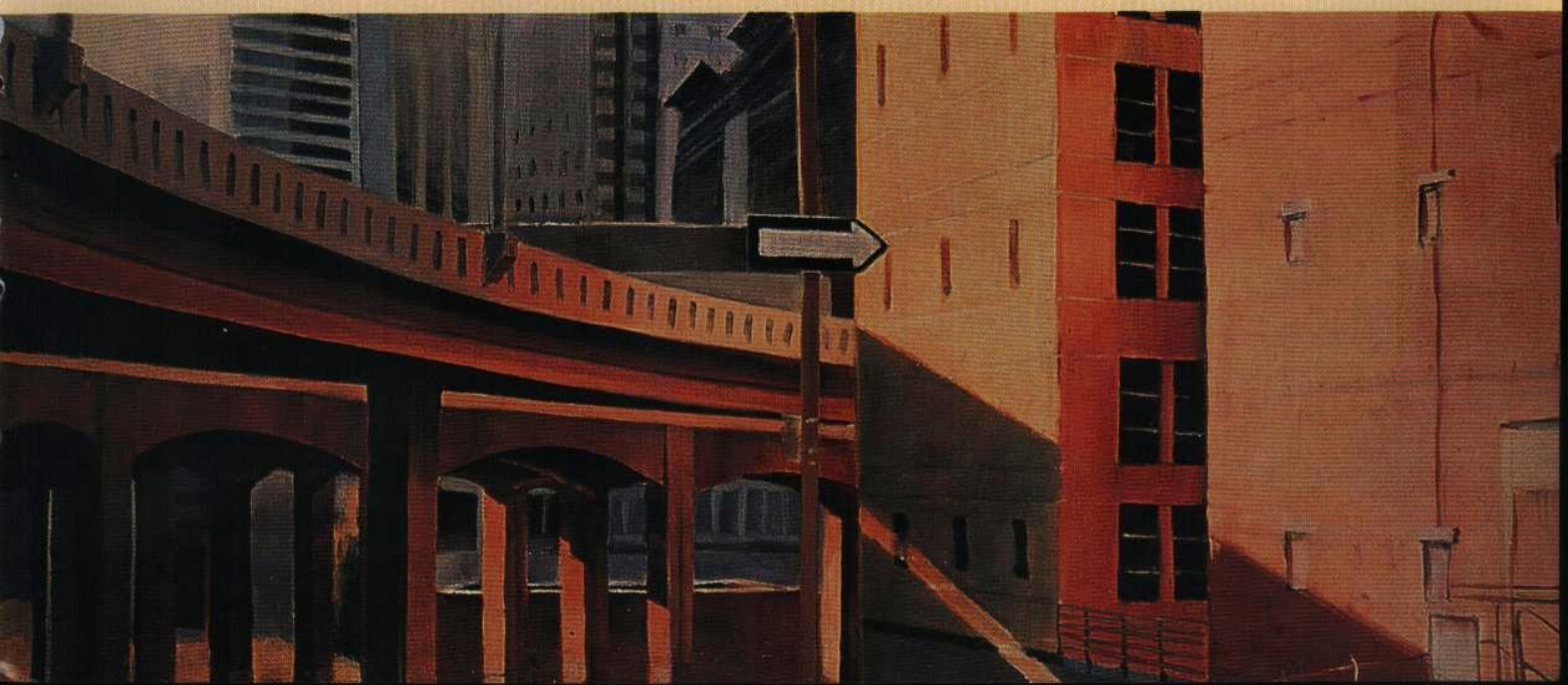
Shankman's noir is expressed in bright neon cutting through low cloud; when afternoon sunlight slants across urban canyons; when skyscrapers and squat, California-Victorian apartments loom like the serrated crests of mountain ranges.

"The landscape here is pretty unique," says the artist of San Francisco's legendary topography. "It's a beautiful city, but it changes constantly in the shifting light. All kinds of hills, angles of relief, and strange perspectives get filtered through fog and sun."

ABOVE: UNTITLED, OIL, 42 X 30.
BELOW: IN BETWEEN, OIL, 18 X 36.
OPPOSITE PAGE: UNTITLED, OIL, 25 X 48.

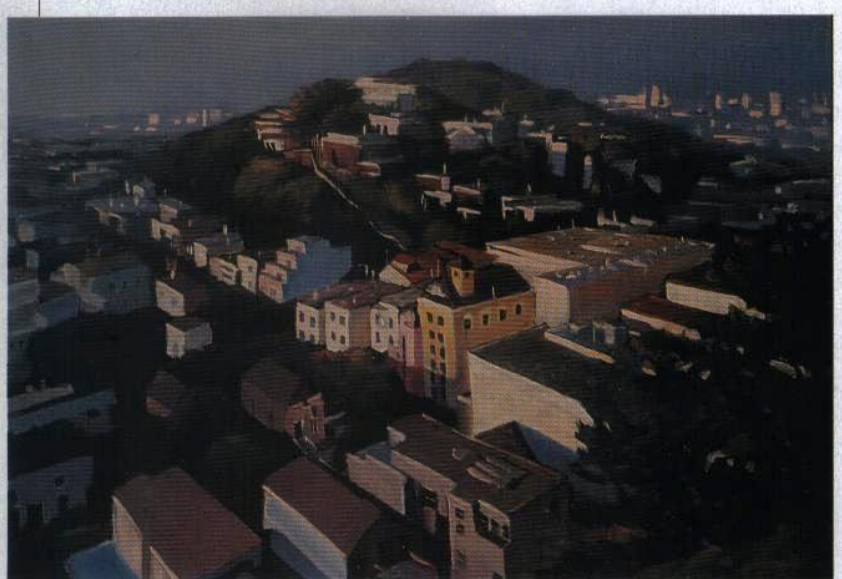
Shankman's contemporary urban-realist art is about dichotomy—between illumination and shade, new and old, haves and have-nots, cacophony and subdued noise, the consciously perceived and the ethereal.

In NEW MISSION, for example, which he describes as a portrait of his own neighborhood, a



taco truck passes through an intersection while an SUV, fresh off the lot, arrives in front of a 19th-century storefront in disrepair yet a surviving vestige from San Francisco's working-class past. The store is portrayed in shadow as afternoon sun glares off the glass of a newly gentrified loft. "Money is injected into a poor neighborhood," Shankman observes, "but misses the vein."

Only a few blocks away, he found the inspiration for another painting, which uses a split freeway overpass to have viewers ponder beauty in the most unobvious of places. He thinks of thousands of commuters roaring to work across the concrete surface without giving any thought to the terra firma. "All day long, the action passes overhead, leaving a void beneath," Shankman muses. "I've read that freeway overpasses are modern cathedrals, and I finally get it. It's not the expression of greatness or the sheer magnitude that fulfills the analogy as much as it is the uneasy, overwhelming silence."



WEST PORTAL, OIL, 21 X 30.

BORN IN 1980 AND RAISED IN BOULDER, Shankman is the son of professor parents on the faculty at the University of Colorado. At an early age, they arranged for him to take music and art classes to broaden his sensitivities. In the fifth grade, Shankman began private classes with illustrator Alexy Pendle, who exposed him to the full range of visual media. "The way that she explained it to me is that illustration is a way of expressing an idea," Shankman says. "While I don't regard my work as being illustrative, what I value about illustrators is their ability to create a composition with minimal effort and in a short period of time that people can understand." With an emphasis placed on drawing, Pendle's tutelage continued through Shankman's senior year of high school.

Instead of pursuing an art degree afterward, however, he attended the University of California at Santa Barbara and pursued a major that combined socioeconomics, political science, and mathematics. Deeply analytical, Shankman has what his friends say is a beautiful mathematical grasp of the world. "I continue to think about spatial and human relationships in mathematical terms," he says, noting that he is particularly intrigued by the notions of chance, coincidence, and probabilities based upon the identification of variables.

As fate would have it, part of Shankman's academic requirements in college demanded that he gain proficiency in a foreign language. He chose Italian and spent a year abroad in Florence, studying art history every day. It stirred a passion that lead him back to his liberal-arts roots. When he returned to campus, he was no longer interested in math.

"I walked out of my math class my first day back and dropped the major. With my new electives, I took a couple of painting classes from two artists I hold in high esteem, Jane Callister and Dimitri Kozyrev, and I got a studio on campus for my entire senior year," he recounts. "For being a non-art major, I got a lot of encouragement that year."

Shankman sold a couple of paintings to a professor and got a commission to do portraits. A piece was even selected for the student show, which is generally closed to non-art majors. After graduation with a degree in global studies, he landed in San Francisco and imposed a deadline of two years to see if he could make it with his art.

Soon thereafter, he and a group of friends and colleagues founded a residential organization called the Million Fishes Art Collective. Their communal space is located in a building in the Mission District that once housed information technology companies. Million Fishes, in fact, could be viewed as a beneficiary of the dot-com collapse of the late 1990s. "Our space became available after a couple of companies went belly up,"

NEW MISSION, OIL, 24 X 60.

Shankman says, noting that the former CEO of one of those companies is their landlord. In San Francisco, both dot-com companies and art cooperatives have been popular for the last half century. But his group, Shankman says, is different.

By design, Million Fishes reaches across disciplinary boundaries. Its oldest member is 38, its youngest is 21; it is split evenly male to female. "What makes us unique is that it's based on the idea of co-creation and cross-pollination. We've had a lot of really interesting people living here," Shankman says. "There is value to living collectively in an environment where everyone is creating art that is critiqued from multiple points of view."

One of Shankman's closest friends is Million Fishes cofounder Yes Duffy, whose interest lies in architecture and urban planning. "Mike is a super-smart kid willing to tackle anything," proposes Duffy, also a twentysomething. "Although he can come across as a laid-back, chilled guy, he is aggressive in challenging himself." Duffy says that Shankman is rooted "in the emotional components that are central to the human experience of cities." While avant-garde in his vision, perhaps, he still rigidly adheres to a classical approach to painting. "To be both consistent and always searching for a better vantage," Duffy adds, "is very unusual for someone his age."

For Shankman, the catalyst is his community. "I am surrounded by other people who share the same struggles and fears, from my girlfriend to my 15 roommates at Million Fishes to the tens of thousands of artists in this city," he explains.

While still a teenager, Shankman remembers feeling drawn to Hopper's ageless works that conveyed existential reflection. "I'm not sure why Hopper's work grabbed me, but the characters were simply stated. I can relate to their pensive moments and their loneliness," Shankman says. Citing Hopper and Wayne Thiebaud as formative influences, Shankman also mentions five others who serve as contemporary points of reference along with his friends at Million Fishes: Andy Goldsworthy, Glenn Brown, Charlie White, Eric Fischl, and Gerhard Richter.

Following a recent show in San Francisco, a private collector approached Shankman and commissioned him to inventively marry the noir of Edward Hopper's style with his own. In an untitled painting, Shankman portrays a warmly lit restaurant that is a tip of the hat to the setting of Hopper's NIGHTHAWKS. Nearby on the sidewalk, Shankman says, "is Hopper himself, awkwardly standing outside in the cold as a female figure—the woman in the yellow hat from Hopper's other classic work, AUTOMAT—passes by." It is Shankman's own tribute to timelessness.

Shankman does not relate to his art through the prism of any "ism." Post-modernism holds no traction; neither does the label of realism. He does, however, believe in the value of responding directly to what one observes and embellishing its ambiance. "For me, the skills I've developed help me communicate with a wide audience of people, many of whom could care less about critical theory," he says. "This is important; I

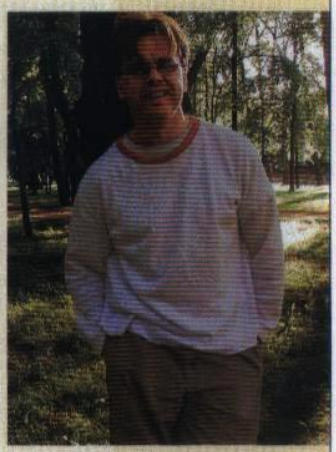
CONTINUED ON PAGE 136

Angels & Orphans

Disadvantaged children in Eastern Europe have captured the artistic attention and personal commitment of painter Nick Kosciuk

By Bonnie Gangelhoff

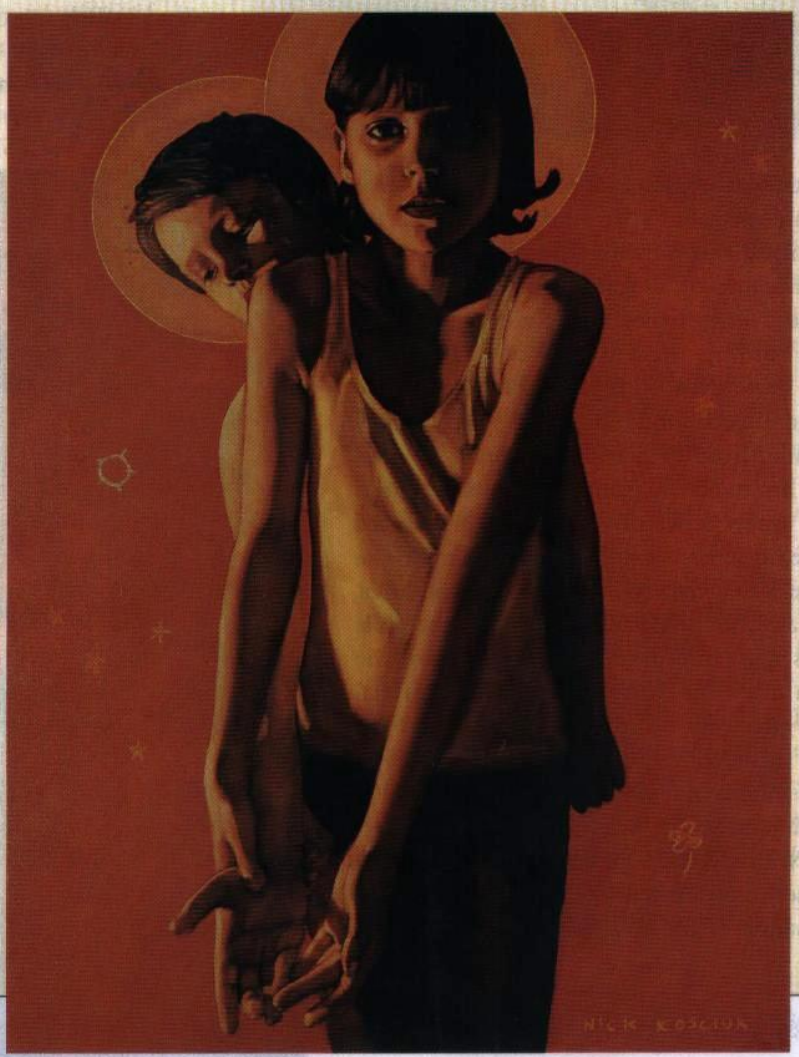
PAULINA, OLYA, ANASTASIA, NATASHA. When Nick Kosciuk hears the children's stories, they always touch his heart—their mothers and fathers abandoned them in orphanages in Belarus, a republic near Russia, to be raised by strangers. The California painter recently returned from his 12th trip to Belarus in four years, bringing back with him not only the tales of orphans from this far-off land but also 2,000 photographs that will serve as reference material for his hauntingly beautiful portraits.



Faces of the Belarusian children stare out from Kosciuk's starkly dramatic canvases, evoking a sense of mystery and the feeling that they have something compelling to say. Some have halos circling their heads, giving them an angelic countenance. Others wrap their arms around each other as if for support. All of their gazes are solemn and serene, innocent but knowing.

One day in December, Kosciuk reflects on his recent trip to Belarus from his studio at home in Cambria, a coastal town in central California. In his left hand, he holds a photograph of one of the children, 11-year-old Olya. In his right hand, he wields a paintbrush, with which he is re-creating the young girl's likeness. Olya's mother had kicked her out of the house and told the

OPPOSITE PAGE: BUTTERFLY IN RED, OIL, 36 X 48.
THIS PAGE: OLYA AND NATASHA IN ORANGE, OIL, 48 X 36.



girl that she was no longer her daughter, Kosciuk recalls. "She told me the story with a smile on her face," he says, noting that the children talk about their parents' neglect and, frequently, alcoholism with the same casualness that children in America talk about their parents' jobs.

He remembers shooting Olya's photograph a few weeks earlier, asking her to write something silly on a green chalkboard and then lean up against it. The girl spontaneously wrote a letter to her mother: "If you love me, I will love you," she inscribed. Kosciuk says that he was taken aback by the direct, matter-of-fact nature of the girl's plea. "People may see this painting and say, 'No way could this be true, could she have really written that,'" he says. "But it *is* true. I didn't prompt her."

Other works in progress are scattered throughout his house, hanging on walls, resting on mantels, and stashed in corners. His painting life spills over into his everyday life, and he is the first to admit that there is little separation. The 41-year-old is divorced, and his two children visit regularly, hanging out in his studio to watch him paint or watch a DVD. Emily, 15, has knit scarves for the children in Belarus, and Calvin, 13, has shared some of his savings. For the first time, Kosciuk plans to take his children on a trip to Belarus in early 2006. "This is better than any kind of sports league for them," he says. "It will ground them and give them a good perspective on life."

THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS is a landlocked nation-state in Eastern Europe that officially declared its independence in 1991 following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Because of allegations of human-rights violations, among other issues, the country has been excluded from joining the Council of Europe, an organization of more than 40 member states with the mission of facilitating economic and social progress.

After returning from each trip to Belarus, Kosciuk buries himself in his studio and paints with a near-religious fervor, creating a new series of works spotlighting the orphans. When each series is completed, the portraits are exhibited at The Vault Gallery in Cambria. Soon after, Kosciuk boards a plane for Belarus and begins the cycle anew. He takes with him a generous portion of the proceeds from art sales and donates it to several orphanages. He gives with no strings attached. "I'm not trying to change them, convert them, or tell them how to spend the money," he says.

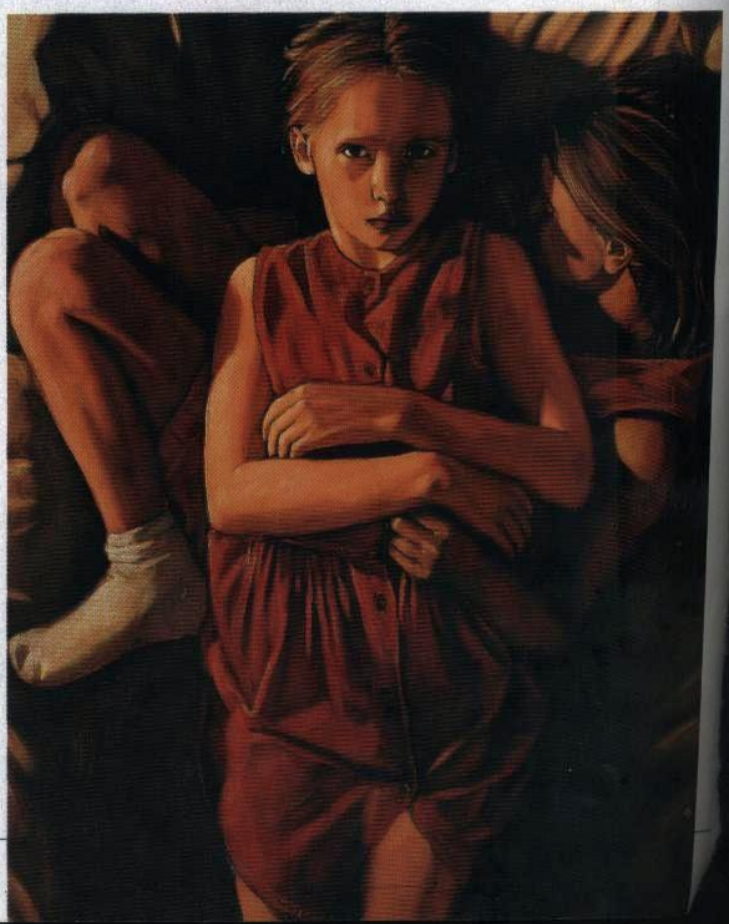
When Kosciuk arrives in Belarus, he usually spends about six weeks with the children, doing everything from playing silly games to taking walks to buy ice cream. And he snaps thousands of photographs with his digital camera. The younger children vie for face time, he says. Taking their photographs gives them time and attention, a very basic need for children. "The tiniest things seem to make such a huge difference in their lives," Kosciuk says.

But why these children? Why does he travel halfway around the globe to find subjects to paint and institutions to which he donates his money?

To understand how Kosciuk became so involved in this effort, it's necessary to go back in time, first a few years and then to an era before he was born. In 2001, he was at a low point in his personal life, the artist recalls. His parents asked him to accompany them on a trip to Belarus to explore the family's roots. Kosciuk's father was born there, and his mother, who was born in a German labor camp after World War II, is also Belarusian. They emigrated to the United States in 1950, married, and settled in South River, NJ, home to a tight-knit Belarusian community. His parents worked hard—his father in a factory and his mother as a waitress and maid. As a child, Kosciuk wasn't too interested in his ethnic identity. "I just wanted to be an American," he recalls.

That would soon change. Once Kosciuk and his parents arrived in Belarus, the stories he had heard as a child from his grandparents came alive for the first time. He met distant relatives and visited the site where his

ANASTASIA AND OKSANA, OIL, 48 X 36.



grandparents' house stood before it was burned to the ground during World War II. He also retraced some of the steps the family took when they fled the country—his grandfather was ordered to the Russian front and refused to fight because he believed "Stalin was more evil than Hitler." Kosciuk saw the road his grandparents traveled to escape, reliving their tales of how Russian soldiers pursued them and how they eventually were declared political refugees and transported to German labor camps.

But it was on the last day of his trip that he had an epiphany, Kosciuk says. A family friend, who was a linguistics professor, took him to visit a nearby orphanage in Rudensk. She usually visited once a week to offer the children Bible study classes. What he witnessed at the orphanage moved him deeply. "I saw so many kids with such a need for love and attention," he recalls. "They were hanging on me. It hit me that there wasn't a long line of people waiting to take my place and give them attention. I was *it*."

Although he says that conditions have improved since then, Kosciuk's first impression of the orphanage was that it was bleak, austere, and depressing. "I was there an hour or so," he says. "In that time, I made a decision that I would come back for the rest of my life."

MARINA IN BLUE, OIL, 48 X 36.

EACH TIME KOSCIUK RETURNS HOME to California from his transglobal journey, a new series of paintings is born. Last year, The Vault Gallery presented Angels & Orphans, a show of 15 stunning works featuring the children posing with oversized butterfly wings attached to their backs. "That spring before I left for Belarus there were a lot of butterflies outside my window," Kosciuk explains. "One day the idea came to me: I could put wings on the children. There seemed a certain rightness to it. And I knew the children would flip over them."

When Kosciuk arrived at the orphanage, the children proved him right—they were eager to don the nylon wings. He posed them near a window, he recalls, and realized that he had unwittingly created a metaphor. "The poor girls seem trapped on the wrong side of the window," he explains. "I often start photographing the children without an idea in my head, and then something surprising happens."

In all of his paintings, Kosciuk says that he is trying to capture the children's beauty, resilience, and strength as well as their vulnerability, fears, and loneliness. "They don't have a past to draw comfort from," he says. "And there is no such thing as hoping for an exciting future. Whatever it is, it will be hard. I'm just trying to show them how important they are. I tell them, 'Someone is paying this much money for a painting of you.'"

By the time this story is published, Kosciuk will be flying back to Belarus, visiting the orphanages once again. Since his fateful trip in 2001, his life keeps getting better and better, the artist says. Among other things, his personal life has taken a surprising turn. During one of his trips in 2004 he met a woman named Tatiana, and they plan to marry in early 2006.

"It blows my mind, what my life has become and what I do for a living," Kosciuk says. "I will never have regrets about the way I lived my life. Painting used to be who I was. Now it is only a means to support who I am, and the orphans. Who I am and what I do is in Belarus." ❑

Bonnie Gangelhoff is a senior editor of *Southwest Art*.

Kosciuk is represented by The Vault Gallery, Cambria, CA.

My World

A visit with landscape painter **MICHAEL GIBBONS** at his studio in Toledo, OR

TEXT BY WOLF SCHNEIDER ~ PHOTOS BY SCOTT SPIKER

You live in Toledo, OR, a pretty little town of 3,700 surrounded by forested hills that's near the coast? Yes, the sign still says 3,500 but people have been moving in like crazy. We've been found!

You're a couple of hours from Portland. I guess that's where you go for a new car or art supplies? Actually, there's a nice art-supply store in Newport, which is only seven miles away. And plenty of car dealerships there. We've got a big bay with a significant fleet here and the Marine Science Center, which is second only to Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Massachusetts.

You grew up in Oregon designing Porsche accessories in your 20s, so I gather you have an appreciation for life's finer things? I do.

What're you driving these days? A Jeep Cherokee. I insist on something that I can get fixed at the local gas station.

Oregon's a pretty progressive state. Isn't euthanasia legal there? Yes, it's very progressive. It's way ahead. The people are really interesting, and there's not so many of them that it's uninhabitable—only 3.5 million in the whole state. Quite a bit of nature.

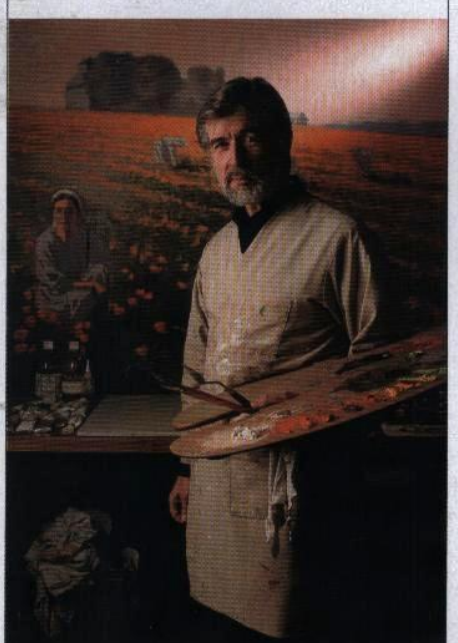
Since you're of Irish lineage, what's your preference: Irish whiskey, Guinness, or Bailey's Irish Cream? It would be Guinness. [*Laughs*]

You're a plein-air painter primarily of rural scenes? Plein air and studio.

Do you consider yourself an impressionist or a realist? I fall between the two, and there are tonal qualities, and I am also a colorist.

What's the key to making landscapes look as inviting as yours? It's the way into the painting. There's something that breaks the bottom picture plane that takes you in. And I use geometry with a golden section that's laid out in a series of ratios—it determines where the central focus will be.

You helped found the Yaquina River Museum of Art, which is housed in The Old Vicarage, a historical house built in 1926 that you own? It's a legacy—a charitable trust. It's a house museum filled with art; we open it by appointment. There's a total collection of 125 pieces now—my paintings, pieces by Ken Auster, Emil Carlsen. We've got four buildings here so artists can come and work, and the museum will collect a piece or two. The mission is to portray the land and people of the Yaquina River watershed. My studio is across the street.



Your studio's in what used to be a Methodist church, originally built back in 1887? Yes.

I hear it's got a painting studio, frame shop, office, carpentry shop, kitchen, and loft, so it must be pretty big. It's 3,300 square feet.

What's the architectural style? New England shingled, unpainted. The house is a shingled Cape Cod, and this goes along with it.

High ceilings? Yes, 21 feet high. White walls, four-inch red-oak plank floors. The north window soars 18 feet in the air and has 165 square feet of glass. Two tall windows on the west side. It's a beautiful place. Leather chairs. Oriental carpets. A wine cellar is being built. We use this place like a salon—there are major collectors who come here.

Where do they stay? Some stay on the coast at the Salishan Lodge.

What do you consider your forte when it comes to painting? Oh, I'm a land-

scape painter, through and through.

How about when it comes to personality? My astrologer says I'm full of fire! Aggressive, single-minded, inventive, entrepreneurial.

Entrepreneurial—that helps explain why you also have maintained a second home and gallery in Arizona for many years. So tell me: oil, acrylics, or watercolor? Oil.

At 62 now, what quality have you decided an artist must have, and what quality will only do an artist in? An artist must always push. What will do them in is getting too comfortable with their work.

What's the trait that's served you best in your career, and what's the trait you deplore in yourself? Best is my persistence. Worst is my tendency to pull inward if I'm a little depressed.

Which artist, living or dead, would you most like to trade a piece of art with? J.W. Waterhouse.

Which artist would you most like an hour of advice from? Emil Carlsen.

What's the range that your work sells for? From $2,200 up to $85,000.

What does an artist need most: a good accountant, a good truck, or a good red wine? All three, plus a terrific spouse and a terrific dealer.

When your time comes to kick the bucket, what sentence would accurately sum it up for your life? "He had a great ride—he'll be back again." [*Laughs*] It's been a good run. ❑

Gibbons is represented by Studio/Gallery Michael Gibbons, Toledo, OR; Gottlieb Gallery, Portland, OR; and Meyer-Munson Gallery, Santa Fe, NM.

INTO THE FOREST

Utah's Connie Borup finds a whole world of captivating moods in trees and leaves

By Joshua Mooney

ABOVE: WHEN LEAVES SING, OIL, 36 X 20.
OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP: HOLDING THE SKY, OIL, 40 X 52.
OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM: FLOATING, OIL, 40 X 52.

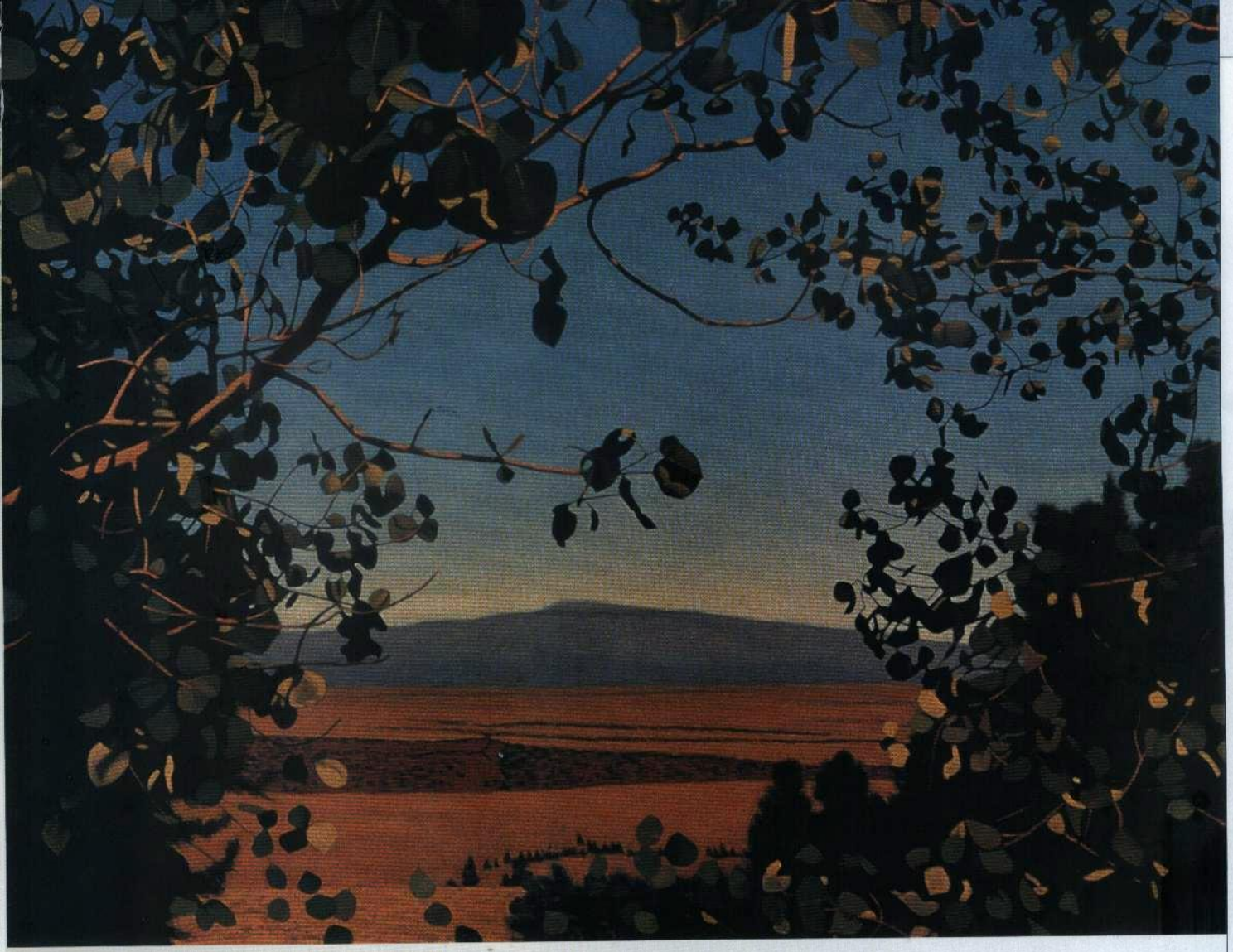
IF YOU "CAN'T SEE THE FOREST FOR THE TREES," you're too caught up in the details to remember the overall picture. But for Utah artist Connie Borup, the situation is quite the opposite—the details of trees are the crucial element of her work that opens up a view into the forest. Borup's uniquely personal landscape paintings capture the serenity and spirituality of nature by zeroing in on precisely chosen images of it: small stands of trees or a single tree, or closer still to a segment of a trunk and branches, or perhaps an intricate pattern of twigs and leaves. "A tree's growth exhibits qualities that I honor in my paintings," she says. "I experience a sense of wonderment as I notice the dignity and grace of these forms."

At a casual glance, a series of Borup canvases might suggest a limiting, even obsessive, devotion to a single subject. Her current works, after all, consist exclusively of trees, and the sky, earth, or water surrounding them, and there is a general repetition of form from piece to piece. But on closer inspection, Borup's work conveys a vast range of emotions, atmospheres, and ideas through her use of shade and light, color, negative space, and the abstract shapes and geometries of her subjects.

Take any three Borup paintings of a single tree species—say, an aspen, her favorite tree—and you might get three very different results. One will suggest the desolation and moody light of a Hopper canvas; another will be saturated with the deep, rich hues of a Tiffany stained-glass window; the third might convey the stark, minimalist geometry of an Ansel Adams photograph.

"Opening up to nature," says Borup, is the primary and central action of creating her paintings. While the growth patterns of trees produce, at least initially, "visual puzzles," a closer, contemplative analysis of a tree unfolding usually elicits an admirable litany of attributes: "upward reach, balance, stability, and harmony," she says.

BORUP, 60, WAS BORN IN SALT LAKE CITY, UT, where she lives today, and spent her childhood in rural Kaysville, UT. While she has traveled, including a pivotal high-school year abroad in Germany, she's never called any place but Utah home. "I grew up in a fairly rural community, so I always had a connection to the landscape and being out of doors," she says. "I lived right next to the Great Salt Lake. These things were really



important—although I didn't fully realize how important until I began painting more seriously."

As a girl, Borup enjoyed drawing, but her real passions were music and languages. She was a serious violin student and also studied German. As a senior in high school she spent a year abroad in Koln, Germany. There, her eyes were opened in a new way to the visual arts. "I had a wonderful art history teacher in Germany, and the family I lived with loved art," she recounts. "And I just kind of made the decision while there that I was going to be an artist. But I came into it kind of slowly."

AUTUMN CANOPY, OIL, 40 X 50.

Music, foreign language, and painting—despite their right-versus-left-brain positioning—are skills that Borup believes are all somehow connected: "I relate being able to hear the *sounds* of a foreign language to music. And I think a lot of musicians are visual artists as well." The whole left-right hemisphere thing is, she suggests, a bit reductive. "To me, it all fits together pretty nicely!" she says.

Borup got a bachelor's degree in German at the University of Utah in 1967, and followed that with a bachelor's in fine arts in 1973. She spent a decade teaching both subjects in Salt Lake City high schools, while continuing to study and paint. In 1992, she completed her master's degree of fine arts in painting and drawing at the University of Utah.

Along the way, she was inspired by art history teachers and other mentors. Among them was well-known Utah artist LeConte Stewart, a Kaysville local whom she recalls from her childhood and with whom she was later able to study. "He was elderly then, but a great teacher," she remembers. "I got so much from him."

Bob Olpin, one of Borup's art history teachers at the University of Utah, was a huge influence, too: "He introduced me to the early American landscape painters of the Hudson River School, and the American Luminists as well. Their whole transcendental attitude toward nature became very important to me." Borup also cites Utah artists Paul Davis and Sam Wilson as helping her develop as a painter.

Today Borup connects with nature as a "pure force," she says, and that purity, in her work, is always undiluted by any hint of man or civilization. "The idea I'm conveying is: You're the first person to see this tree," she explains. "Nobody else has been here before and made a path for you."

At the beginning of her career, Borup painted more conventional rural landscapes; but over time, the unessential contextual aspects began to fall away. Her trees, then, are her true subjects; they're never simply there to provide scale for a man and his horse, or as the backdrop to bucolic towns or warm-windowed cottages.

What remains in her work today is a simplicity, even a sense of isolation, that can nevertheless produce a full range of moods and feelings. She has said, "I am interested in the austere, lonely quality of country not touched by the human desire to control. This lack of reference to civilization presents us with a slightly portentous, yet peaceful landscape: frail, yet ordered. Severe yet inviting."

She reflects today, "My comment about austerity—I think that's pretty deep personality stuff. I don't want my paintings to be *happy*, but I don't want them to be *sad*, either. At first I was attracted to trees without leaves—I found that austerity beautiful. But it's also a kind of unpredictable beauty, and maybe a nonartist wouldn't find it beautiful. My goal is to represent it in such a way that the beauty shows through."

Some have described Borup's paintings as being in the tonalist tradition of the early 20th century, though she says, "It may be tonalist in some aspects,

but I don't think it fits completely in that category." Certainly, the work of tonalist Charles Warren Eaton, known for paintings of the white pines of Connecticut, is within range. Yet it might be more accurate to describe Borup's canvases as a bold zooming-in on the trees of landscapes by transcendentalists like Asher P. Durand.

While Borup initially worked often in the field, she finds that her current technique, and the size of her canvases, is best suited to the studio. She works mostly in a range from 40 by 52 inches to 50 by 72 inches, and almost exclusively in oil. The medium, she says, has "a real material presence, as opposed to watercolor. I love working with the paint and the fact that it can always be changed. I like to layer it—when you look closely at one of my skies, you can see all the layers underneath informing the top layer. Oil just allows me the most opportunity to do what I want to do."

For reference images, Borup uses digital photos that she has cropped and enlarged. She describes her technique, with a laugh, as "long, tedious, and a bit crazy." She works on each painting for about three weeks. "As a starting point, I have a tree or branch form, and the negative space," Borup explains. "Then I paint the leaves, and then the negative spaces up to the leaves and branches. I do that because I'm really interested in the shapes of negative spaces, and I also like to get the kind of jittery edge you can get by the meeting of the two. It's kind of like doing a jigsaw puzzle."

It's a technique that requires plenty of patience. She adds with a laugh, "And I have a dedicated work ethic. In fact I use this as part of my process. I'm willing to paint all these negative shapes because I'm interested in the beauty that it produces."

Borup's studio for the past 13 years has been in an area of Salt Lake City called Sugarhouse, which has become, she says, "the Soho of Salt Lake City," with dozens of artists' studios and three art galleries. Her husband of 38 years, Paul, builds her frames.

Each tree has its own personality, not just a unique shape, Borup believes. "Another thing about trees is that they're opportunistic plants—they're some of the first growth to come back after a forest fire. Also, they essentially grow from another tree, so they all end up connected by a root system." The metaphoric aspect of this is not lost on her. "Their cooperative growth patterns remind me of the potential for human growth and give me hope for our ability to create a harmonious world."

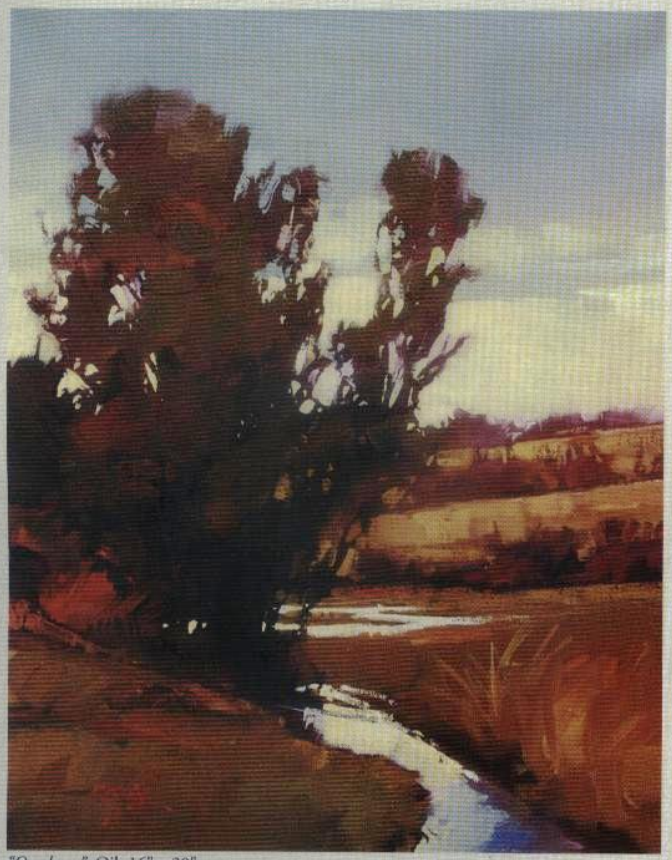
That world would, naturally, include a healthy abundance of trees and forests. But in today's America of rampant development, is any tree safe? In the name of progress, aren't there too many who can't see the forest for the building material it represents? Borup is keenly aware of these ecological issues, yet she doesn't consider her paintings social statements.

THE UNDERSIDE OF THE LEAVES, OIL, 40 X 48.

"Of course I know what's going on," she acknowledges. "But I'm just in awe of growing trees, and I want to celebrate that and deal with their aspects of beauty. Possibly, my images can influence people to respect and honor natural growth more. I hope!" ❑

New York-based Joshua Mooney is a contributor to many publications, including the original *Movieline*, and is completing his first novel.

Borup is represented by Gail Severn Gallery, Ketchum, ID, and Phillips Gallery, Salt Lake City, UT.



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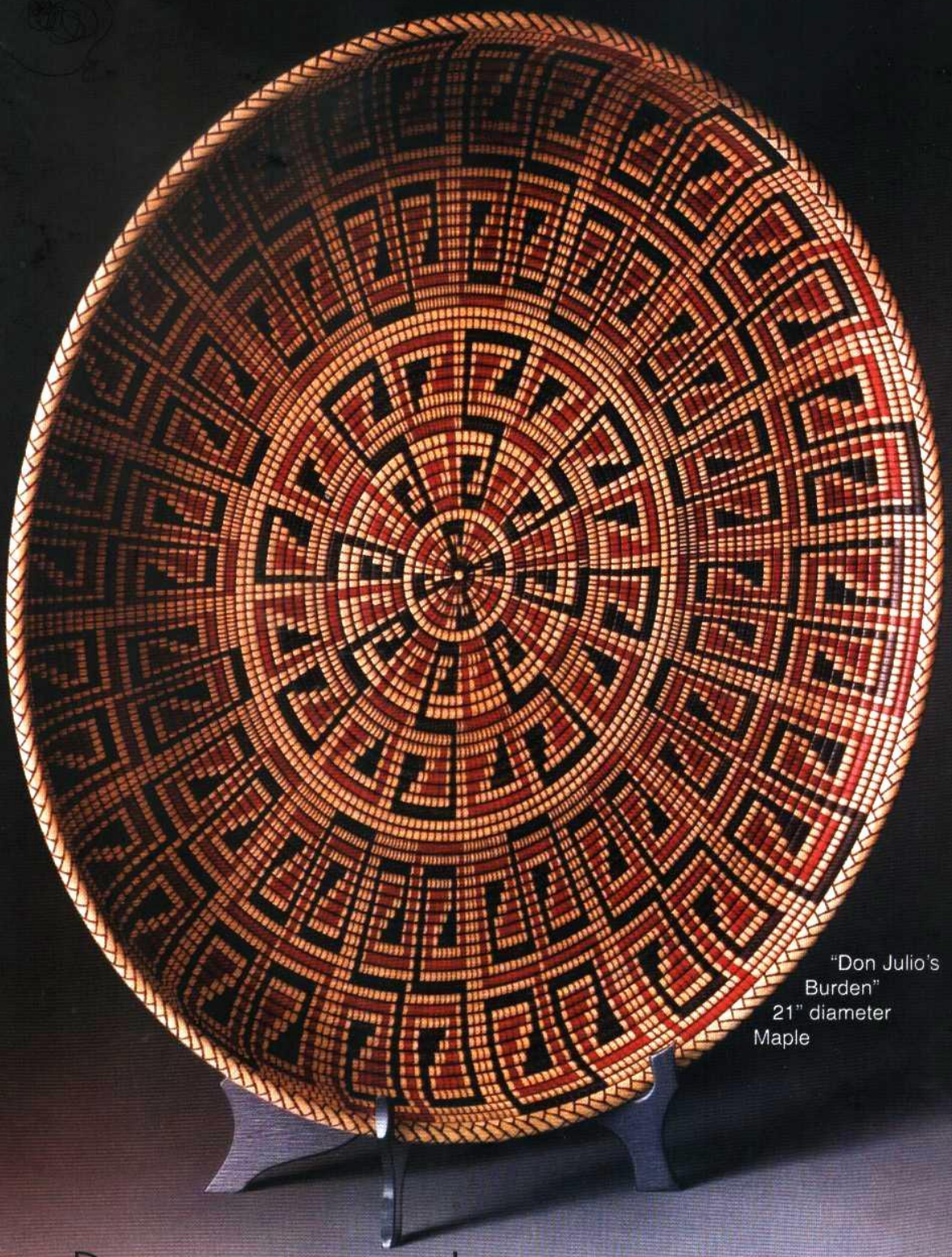

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